THE Nation

October 16, 1954

20¢

FALL BOOK ISSUE

John W. Aldridge

Joyce Cary

George Dangerfield

Arthur Garfield Hays

Joseph Wood Krutch

Donald Ogden Stewart

Stanley Walker

and others

Gustav W. Heinemann

Rearmament: a German View

Michael Foot

The Meaning of Bevanism

OCT 19 1954

EAST TENNESSEE STATE COLLEGE

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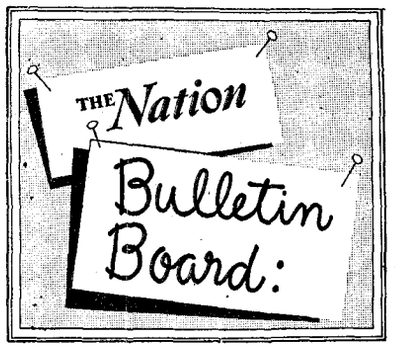

IN THE 1920's and '30's the literary landscape resounded with the alarums and excursions of sundry critics. Controversy flourished; much of the writing had a vigorous, trenchant quality, as critics sought to relate literature to the time in which they lived.

Today much of the vigor and controversy has vanished. Critics have become more and more concerned with methodology and with psychological analyses which readers can follow only if they are familiar with hosts of obscure myths and legends as well as with a special jargon. The intentions of the author, the literary values of the book, are often shunted aside by the critics' urge to delve into the Freudian connotations of words and situations.

In presenting John W. Aldridge as a regular contributor (see page 328) it is our belief that his tonic brand of criticism, his sharp challenge to intrenched schools and attitudes, will contribute to a revival of the literary controversies which used to thrive in America.

If you want to get a more extended view of Aldridge's work I recommend his first book "After the Lost Generation" (McGraw-Hill), which Malcolm Cowley called "the first serious and challenging book about the new novelists." As for Aldridge's style, William Barrett in the *Saturday Review* described it as "refreshingly different from the turgid productions of some of the new generation of critics." (Not that Aldridge doesn't belong to the "new" generation: he is, after all, a disputatious, brilliant young man of exactly thirty-one.)

STANLEY WALKER, whose review of Tom Connally's new book appears in this issue, was born in Lampasas County, Texas, in 1898. After attending the University of Texas, he worked on Texas newspapers and then went to New York in the winter of 1919. He spent twenty-six years there as a newspaperman, most of them with the *Herald Tribune*. In the spring of 1946 he returned to Lampasas County, where he runs a small ranch and does occasional writing. Here is his own candid snapshot of himself: "An unreconstructed Grover Cleveland Democrat; takes no subsidies of any sort; buys his own legumes and grass seeds, builds his own terraces and ponds, does his own brush and weed eradication, etc., and declines to accept drought relief in the form of lower-priced feeds. Has consistently opposed *all* Roosevelts, of whatever branch. Is anti-McCarthy, anti-prohibition, anti-clerical, anti-Communist, anti-New Deal, anti-Fair Deal, anti-censorship, anti-Coolidge, pro-Ricardo, pro-Mencken, pro-Al Smith, pro-Eisenhower and Dewey, pro-Churchill, and mildly pro-Human Race."

RETURNS ARE ROLLING IN on the Giveaway issue and the 50,000 extra copies have dwindled to 6,000. Democratic organizations and farm and labor groups throughout the country have been buying them by the thousand. Senator Warren Magnuson of Washington writes: "I enjoyed reading The Great Giveaway in *The Nation's* special issue of October 2, more especially so because it is just what I have been telling the Congress and the people of the country for the last two years. It is good that it has been put into such readable form. I only wish every voter could read it before election."

IN THE LAST Bulletin Board I said that we would award current selections of The Nation's Choice to readers who sent in items that could be published in this column. Here are the first two winners:

Cecile Trace, of Chicago, Illinois: "A candidate for state office in Illinois running on the Republican ticket was told by a member of his audience that wire-tapping was dangerous. 'You needn't worry,' the candidate replied; 'it won't be used on ordinary criminals—just Communists.'"

A Berkeley, California, teacher: "A little second-grader proudly announced to her father that she had learned the 'new' Pledge of Allegiance in school that day. She recited: 'I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the republic for which it stands, one nation *under guard,* with liberty and justice for all.'"

MARTIN SOLOW

Letters

No Voting Records

Dear Sirs: Thank you for sending us a copy of the special October 2 issue dealing with the Great Giveaway. It's a splendid job. . . . I want to call your attention, however, to an error on page 277. We do not have any voting records for public distribution. We supply our state organizations with an exhaustive voting record and they make up their own material for public distribution.

HENRY ZON,
Director of Public Relations,
C. I. O.-P. A. C.
Washington

On Faulkner's "A Fable"

Dear Sirs: I am at a loss to understand how a reviewer who has apparently read the book he is reviewing as acutely and sympathetically as Carlos Baker has read Faulkner's "A Fable" (*The Nation,* August 7) could have thought the novel's opening scene was set in Paris. The urban locale is described quite clearly as a fair-sized town near the western front, and later in the novel is called "Chaulnesmont" by the author, in contradistinction to Paris, which is always given its proper name in the book. To judge from Faulkner's description and the general geographical setting, "Chaulnesmont" is based physically upon Château Thierry—a theory anyone can test by checking the street plan of that city in a "Guide Michelin" against the depiction of the war-torn town of the novel.

I wonder, too, why Mr. Baker regards the German general in the book as "caricatured and stagy." It may be he is unfamiliar with German generals—if so, I suggest he read J. W. Wheeler-Bennett's study of the German General Staff between the two world wars, "The Nemesis of Power," in which the murders, assassinations, power-politics, excesses of brutal discipline, and insane adherence to military "ethics" indulged in by German generals far outweigh in the grotesque melodrama of reality anything that is stated or implied on the subject in Faulkner's novel.

On the whole, however, I wish to commend Mr. Baker on what I regard as an incisive, sensitive review of a major novel.

Flushing, N. Y. WILLIAM BLACKBEARD

Portrait or Caricature?

Dear Sirs: I appreciate Mr. Blackbeard's generous commentary on my review of Faulkner's "A Fable." He is very probably correct about the city where the opening scene occurs, though I must say that Faulkner's description leaves positive certainty questionable. As to the second point, I would maintain that whatever the facts about the conduct of the German General Staff, a writer has an obligation to make his characters dramatically credible. I simply think that Faulkner overdid his portrait to the point of caricature.

Biddeford Pool, Me. CARLOS BAKER

(Continued on page 352)

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Volume 179, Number 16
New York, Saturday, October 16, 1954

THE Nation
EVERY WEEK SINCE 1865

EDITORIALS

The Monstrous Risk . . *by Freda Kirchwey*

SINCE the French, the divided but stubborn and uncooperative French, were considered the main obstacle to a European defense agreement, a vote in the National Assembly indorsing the London agreement should logically end doubt and settle the question of arming Germany. But will it? Not entirely. What still stands in the way is an obdurate fact—one that has largely been obscured by the lesser issues decided at London.

Slowly, in the course of the negotiations first over E. D. C. and then over the Brussels pact, it came to be taken for granted that German rearmament was no longer a matter of dispute but was inevitable. It was hardly mentioned except in the context of ways and means of making it more safe or more palatable. As a result, logical perhaps but ironic too, the French Assembly's rejection of E. D. C. gave the counter-proposals of Premier Mendès-France almost magisterial authority. He could modify them to meet reasonable objections from his colleagues at London; he could accept or reject amendments offered there. But the issue of a rearmed Germany could no longer be raised, and the discussions were about details—important details to be sure, such as Eden's historic commitment of British military power to the Continent for as long as the nine allied powers may decide, but not about the major premise.

At London nobody was any longer asking the old questions that still underlie all newer questions: once agreement is reached on arming the Germans, how much trust can one have in self-imposed limitations on German military strength? How much security is to be had from building West German divisions that will swiftly be matched or outstripped by East German divisions already in the making? What hope will remain of peaceful unification of the two Germanys—to which not only Bonn but the Western alliance is committed—when each is separately and fully armed as part of a hostile armed bloc of states? Will there then be any hope of unification except through war or through a deal with Russia that would bring a united Germany, arms and all, into the Eastern bloc? Confronted with the threat of a rearmed Germany allied to the West, will not the Soviet government use every possible means, short of war, to prevent or counter the new alliance? May it not even propose peaceful unification of Germany on terms the West has previously proposed and Russia has previously rejected —thus presenting an alternative which the new nine-power alliance cannot easily turn down without forfeiting the support of their peoples and parliaments?

As far as reports showed, none of these questions were asked or answered at London. They were simply not on the agenda. But already they are becoming "actual," as the French say; in fact, of course, they were "actual" all the time, just behind the scenes, and the moment the London conference adjourned, amid mutual congratulations and press applause, they stalked back to the middle of the stage.

THE NATION has never believed, and does not now believe, that the serious issues of peace or war or of European security can be resolved by creating a German army. Whether as part of a defense "community" or as a mere ally, Germany rearmed presents monstrous risks which cannot be averted by Adenauer's promises or Western controls. After World War I, Germany was pledged by its signature to the Treaty of Versailles to rigid disarmament. The Weimar Republic began violating that agreement, under the inspiration of the old war leaders, as soon as its economic recovery permitted. The story has been thoroughly documented since World War II from the records found in the Nazi archives. Will Germany act differently today when the principle of rearmament is overwhelmingly indorsed, and when the policy of the West, directed from Washington, is concentrated on a race to pile up military power greater than that of Russia? Unless an agreement with Moscow checks this suicidal competition, one can sagely predict that Bonn, as the strongest member of the West European alliance, will soon be asked to do what Hitler and his predecessors did by stealth and deception—the more so since Russia can be counted upon to waste no time in building up the power of East Germany.

That such a race will give the Germans a chance to bargain directly with Russia for the reunion of the country and even for the satisfaction of their territorial claims needs no demonstration. As James P. Warburg said on his return from Europe last week: "Russia and Russia alone will be in a position to offer the Germans the liberation of their 18,000,000 compatriots in the East and the return of their lost territories." He described the London agreement as "reckless and irresponsible," turning over "the future of Europe to an as yet shapeless and partitioned Germany." With this judgment we agree,

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and we share the fears expressed by the able German Protestant leader, Gustav W. Heinemann, on a later page of this issue. But one might accept the risks of a militarized German state if that seemed necessary as a means of countering the still greater risks of Soviet attack. In the context of recent developments such an argument sounds hollow. No sober person believes today that Moscow plans an armed attack on the West. Besides, it is a simple fact that the Kremlin has always regarded as the chief threat to its security the rise of a rearmed Germany incorporated in the Western bloc. To bring this threat into existence before testing again the possibility of a four-power solution of the German problem, as proposed by Molotov, seems less excusable today than ever before.

Nor would the policy of German rearmament make much more sense even if the Western powers genuinely feared Russian aggression. As Dr. Heinemann makes shockingly clear, a war begun in Europe now would from the first moment be an atomic-hydrogen war. "It has already been reported," he says, "that American atomic artillery now stationed in Germany is as destructive as the Hiroshima A-bomb." A war initiated with such weapons would have little use, we assume, for a handful of German divisions denied the use of atomic weapons.

IN BONN, Dr. Adenauer has won his first test vote on the London agreements. Rejecting a Socialist proposal that the decision be postponed until negotiations have been held with the Russians for German reunification, the Bundestag approved the agreements by an easy majority. But the bitter debate before the vote showed how irreconcilable is the large minority in opposition. And the West German Trade Union Federation backed this position by voting 380 to 4 to oppose rearming until "all possibilities for negotiations on the unification of Germany have been exhausted."

In France, as this issue goes to press, the National Assembly is clearly prepared to support "in principle" the plan brought home from London by Premier Mendès-France. His decision to make it an issue of confidence clinched the victory. But there, too, the profound skepticism of the nation was evident in its cold reception of the proposals. And the further steps required to spell out and then apply the terms of the agreement will certainly be fought over, one by one, with the final outcome far from certain.

The proposal of Molotov had little immediate effect in either case. It was too pat, too crudely directed to the debate in Bonn and Paris, to carry much weight. Yet M. Mendès-France found it wise to leave the door open a crack by suggesting that before the London pact was completed and put into effect there would be plenty of time for negotiations with Moscow on "disarmament" and other great issues.

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We hope so. We hope that the Russians mean business and are prepared to go a long way to justify and support the gathering resistance to the London proposals in Germany and France, as well as in Britain. If Moscow were to offer German unification through genuinely free elections, and an agreement to prevent rearming for a stipulated period of years, this opposition might well prove irresistible—too strong to be overcome by Washington's threats of withdrawal from Europe. But it would have to be an explicit, unequivocal offer which would convince the West that the Russians were willing to give up East Germany, if necessary, in order to keep all Germany disarmed. And it would have to come soon; otherwise the plans now being hurried toward completion will probably be accepted, however half-heartedly, and the hope of peaceful coexistence postponed if not destroyed.

Shadows Over U. N.

BY J. ALVAREZ DEL VAYO

United Nations

THE general debate which opened the current session of the United Nations Assembly lasted an unusually long time—there were forty-two speakers—but it is at last at an end and the committees have begun their work. The oratory in the general debate revolved around five major points:

The tendency of the big powers to by-pass the U. N. Many speakers echoed that part of Secretary General Hammarskjold's annual report which deplored the fact that important international decisions are being reached with increasing frequency outside the U. N.

Regional organizations. Several Latin American countries sharply attacked the decision of the Security Council in the Guatemala case to relinquish jurisdiction to the Organization of American States, which is more amenable to United States pressures. Similarly other speakers questioned whether regional treaties such as that signed at Manila are truly reconcilable with the spirit of the U. N. Charter.

Technical assistance. The smaller nations especially attacked the lack of enthusiasm with which the Point Four and technical-assistance programs have been pressed.

The Middle East. How the pursuit of "collective security" in cold-war terms can result in regional insecurity was pointed out by Ambassador Eban of Israel, who attacked the arming of the Arabs by the United States and Britain and reiterated his own country's desire for peace with its neighbors.

Cold-war tensions. East-West relations, of course, dominated the whole course of the debate. In this connection two conflicting patterns of thought emerged. On the one hand, the group of delegates dedicated to peace by negotiation saw in every easing of international tension an opportunity for further easement through further negotiation. On the other hand, the negotiation-from-strength adherents tended to react in opposite fashion. Thus the easement accomplished at Geneva was followed swiftly by the establishment of SEATO, and the killing of E. D. C. in the French National Assembly by the consecration of German disarmament at the London conference.

IT MUST be said that an aura of hypocrisy surrounded many of the expressions of regret that the U. N. was being increasingly "by-passed." As V. K. Krishna Menon of India pointed out, if the U. N. could play no role in the ending of the Indo-China war, it was because one of the major powers involved—Communist China—was barred from the U. N. The truth is that no delegate who voted against the admission of the only legitimate Chinese government to the world organization has the right to "regret" the U. N.'s diminishing influence in world affairs. When a British representative, speaking from the Assembly rostrum, can say in effect, "For us there is only one Chinese government, the government of Peking, but my vote is against having it here," then all the talk favoring the principle of universality for the U. N., and all the pious wishes expressed for strengthening its authority, are reduced to mere verbalisms.

On the question of the jurisdiction of regional organizations vis-à-vis that of the U. N., the contributions to the debate by Dr. Francisco Gamarra of Uruguay, who is president of his country's Supreme Court, and Dr. José Vicente Trujillo of Ecuador, should be read in connection with the transcript of the meeting of the Security Council last June which made aggression a respectable word in the U. N. On that occasion I wrote that the two Latin American delegates to the council—the Brazilian and the Colombian—who preferred the congratulatory handshake of the United States representative, Ambassador Lodge, to defending the principle of non-intervention which has inspired all inter-American conferences and agreements, would "one day have to justify their behavior before Latin American public opinion."

Mr. Vishinsky's proposals on atomic control and disarmament gave some life to what was otherwise a rather colorless debate. At least it gave delegates something to talk about in the corridors. The initial United States reaction was, of course, that the Russians were "giving out again with the same old stuff." But both Selwyn Lloyd of Great Britain and M. Guérin de Beaumont of France welcomed the Soviet proposals as representing a significant concession. In Mr. Lloyd's words, the Russians were "holding out the possibility of progress in this all-important field."

It is, in fact, impossible to deny that Mr. Vishinsky's speech represents progress—and progress of a kind, interestingly enough, anticipated by Jules Moch's able analysis of the prospects for disarmament that appeared in

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the May 15 issue of *The Nation*. By agreeing to accept the Anglo-French disarmament memorandum, drafted in London on June 11, as the point of departure, Moscow has abandoned its position that the "immediate and unconditional" outlawing of atomic weapons must precede any agreement on disarmament and the establishment of controls. The Soviets now agree to a stage-by-stage reduction in armaments and call for a "permanent international control commission" with powers of inspection "to the extent necessary to insure" the carrying out of any agreement. All this makes it difficult for Mr. Dulles to continue to insist, as he insisted in his Assembly speech a few days before Mr. Vishinsky spoke, that the Russian position on disarmament was "99 per cent negative."

Inevitably all the important diplomatic events which have been taking place outside of the U. N. projected themselves into the general debate. In this connection both the press and many of the delegates were inclined to take too lightly, perhaps, Mr. Vishinsky's warning concerning the consequences of the London agreement to rearm Germany. But those of us who have repeatedly stated that German rearmament and war are equivalent terms are not making this mistake. The Soviet delegate's comment was followed by Mr. Molotov's new proposal, put forward in East Berlin, for the immediate withdrawal of all occupation troops from Germany and the launching of fresh discussions on German unity with a hint of possible consideration of free elections. Here again the immediate Western reaction was that Moscow was up to its old tricks. Yet some delegates, aware of the dangerously explosive character of the German rearmament problem, are not inclined to dismiss Mr. Molotov in such cavalier fashion. Here is one subject that will undoubtedly influence the discussions in the Political Committee which began this week.

The Mitchell Victory

by Alex Gottfried

Seattle, Washington

THE nomination of ex-Senator and ex-Representative Hugh B. Mitchell in the First Congressional District (Seattle-Bremerton) Democratic primary was the most significant result of the Washington primaries for those who desire an end to the present organization of Congress. (Neither Senate seat was contested this year.) This is true not only because among the Democratic aspirants Mitchell had the best chance of unseating the incumbent but also because he has something of a national reputation as a liberal, based upon his excellent record in both the House and the Senate.

Mitchell won easily in a three-cornered race, defeating Stimson Bullit, the 1952 Democratic candidate for the same office, and Mrs. Alice Franklin Bryant. He received more than 30,000 votes as against 14,000 for Bullit and 6,000 for Mrs. Bryant. In other contests, aside from those for a few minor offices, everything went according to form in one of the lightest votes since the war.

Except in the case of Mitchell, the results do not permit confident predictions of party strength in the elections. Confidence is precluded also by the Washingtonian's proclivity for independent voting, the virtual non-existence of disciplined party machines, and the complications caused by the so-called blanket, or wide-open, primary. The well-nigh anarchic party structure and the vaunted independence of the electorate are demonstrated by the anomaly of the Washington delegation to Congress—two Democratic Senators and six Republican Representatives out of seven. (The lone Democratic Representative was elected by the narrowest of margins.)

The campaign was a curious one in many ways. All three Democratic candidates were persons of intelligence and ability. All were known as "liberals." Practically no domestic issues divided them, and Mitchell and Bullit were not far apart on foreign policy.

Mitchell held all the aces and played them shrewdly, with his political radar always tuned to partisan expediency. His major asset was the familiarity of his name. He had been a candidate from the Seattle area more than half-a-dozen times, and only two years before had run a creditable race for the governorship. He was the unofficial choice of organized labor and the party organization—such as it is. At one time he was secretary to Governor Mon Walgren. To neutralize Republican charges of leftist tendencies and A. D. A. support, he tried to divest himself of the liberal label. He failed to appear at an A. D. A. meeting as scheduled and publicly congratulated the Velde committee when it was sitting in Seattle.

Bullit, an energetic young lawyer of a well-to-do Seattle family, fought well against heavy odds. He did not try to hide his progressive past, but he may not have appeared liberal enough for support from some quarters. Although he did not practice Mitchell's bald expediencies, neither did he emphasize civil-liberties issues.

Mrs. Bryant largely ignored domestic issues, frankly admitting unfamiliarity with certain problems. She campaigned almost exclusively on a "peace platform" and urged renewal of negotia-

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tions to end the "hot peace," control of the H-bomb, and disarmament. Some dismissed her as a crackpot, but she received six thousand votes, which is rather impressive considering that she had limited funds and a very sketchy organization.

All six incumbent Republican Congressmen were renominated—including Representative Westland, ex-golf champion—either with merely token opposition or with none. In five of the six districts the incumbents outpolled the combined Democratic candidates. In the First District the vote of the unopposed Republican candidate, Thomas M. Pelly, was a good deal less than Mitchell's. Pelly is a respected business man who is considered a "liberal" Eisenhower Republican.

Of the Democratic contests, only that in the Third District was close, former State Senator Clyde V. Tisdale defeating James Carty by about two hundred votes. This race is significant because during the campaign Tisdale publicly revealed that he had once been a member of the Communist Party for a short time. The Associated Press reported that Tisdale described this brief affiliation as a "foolish action which he quickly regretted, but an experience which put him in a better position to fight communism." He ignored an order by the Democratic state chairman to withdraw his candidacy. In the end his victory did him no good. The Democratic state organization disclaimed him as its candidate and will deny him all support, thus conceding the election to the Republicans.

The state's lone Democratic House member, Congressman-at-large Don Magnuson, running unopposed, polled nearly a quarter of a million votes, or more than double those cast for the victor in the Republican primary, Al Canwell. In 1952 Magnuson, then a political novice, was the Democratic dark horse who defeated the same Canwell by a narrow margin. Mr. Canwell, who boasts of his close friendship with McCarthy, was the chairman of the state un-American activities committee which investigated the University of Washington in 1948. Magnuson must be considered the likely winner in November. Canwell has many enemies in his own party, while Magnuson's huge vote would have been even heavier had not many of his supporters infiltrated the Republican primary in order to have the privilege of voting against Canwell.

THE MEANING OF BEVANISM

British Labor's Dilemma . . . *by Michael Foot*

London

BRITISH Labor assembled for its annual conference at Scarborough this year in the belief that full political power may soon be in its grasp. The latest public-opinion poll has shown an emphatic swing away from the Tories. Many find these polls difficult to interpret, since the Tory administration has had a fine run of luck in world trade conditions and no paramount issue has appeared to rouse public anger against them. However, a general election is almost certain next year, and a Labor government could be elected to office.

What kind of government would it be? That governing question, more than the immediate issues put to the vote, is what the party conference was called upon to decide; the rank and file help to fix the temper and will-power of the leadership. In 1945, for example, Labor was elected on a full-scale program of public ownership and social reform. This was combined with a firm aspiration to seek an escape from the old ways of British imperialism. The impetus behind this movement was strong enough to carry through a considerable domestic revolution and to make possible abroad the liberation of India and decisive advance in most British colonial territories.

By contrast, the Labor government narrowly reelected to power in 1950 was content to stay in office without contemplating any further big changes. Its domestic aim was to consolidate the gains already achieved but to attempt no fresh breaches in capitalist power. It was not by accident, for example, that this same government was responsible for the banishment of Seretse Khama, the adoption of a rearmament program beyond Britain's power to sustain, or the acceptance in principle of German rearmament. These and many kindred actions fitted into the same pattern. Democratic socialism in Britain was losing some of its vitality and was ceasing to be confident, as it certainly was confident in 1945, that it had a distinctive contribution to make to a world torn by Communist and anti-Communist crusades.

Since its defeat at the polls in 1951 British Labor has been groping to rediscover the daring and enthusiasm which gave it dynamic strength in 1945. That has been the real meaning of Bevanism. If Aneurin Bevan had not existed, he would have had to be invented. The overwhelming response favoring policies associated with his name from the constituency Labor parties throughout the country is not a temporary phenomenon. It is certainly not the mere result of a personal campaign or of the irritations between colleagues which occur in almost any party. It was an instinctive revolt against the notion which seemed to be growing in the Labor Party leadership that the Labor Party was merely an alternative administration, no longer seeking to carry through fundamental changes in society and ready to join with the Tories in accepting the principle of continuity of policy both at home and abroad.

This has been the persistent argument

MICHAEL FOOT is a Labor Member of Parliament and joint editor of the London Tribune.

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Vicky in the London *Daily Mirror*

Peaceful Coexistence

which has troubled the Labor Party for the past three years, and more and more clearly it has been evident that the basic decisions had to be made in the field of foreign affairs. Would a new Labor government seek to deflect Western policy from its present course even at the risk of injuring the solidity of the Anglo-American alliance? Would such a government strive to translate the vague word "coexistence" into a practical program of negotiation with the Communist countries? Many people, naturally enough, have interpreted the official Labor Party delegation to Moscow and Peking as a bid in this direction. But the conclusion is premature. Everyone in Britain from Sir Winston Churchill leftward believes in coexistence. The vital question is therefore what steps Labor as opposed to the Tories would be ready to take in the effort to make coexistence something better than a fragile truce, ever at the mercy of the war parties in either Moscow or Washington.

LABOR'S conference at Scarborough still leaves the answer to this question blurred. The crucial test came on the rearming of Germany. Instead of instructing its leaders to press for a fresh four-power conference with the Russians before the fatal first step is taken in assisting an arms race in a divided Europe, Labor has left them a free hand. This means, almost certainly, that there will be no official Labor opposition to whatever plans for rearming Germany emerge from the London conference and the recent negotiations. Bipartisanship in foreign policy toward Europe between Labor and the Tories remains intact. Official Labor appears to make the strange choice of preferring Adenauer to Ollenhauer. The claim of the German Social Democrats that priority should be given to the attempt to secure the reunification of Germany and that this should form an indispensable part of a genuine coexistence policy has been brushed aside.

A similarly blurred impression of Labor's aim is given by the decisions reached about the Far East. This verdict may sound strange in American ears. Mr. Attlee has been variously portrayed as the convivial guest of Communist murderers or the dupe of Mao and Chou En-lai. Even if these fantasies are disbelieved, has he not roundly denounced Chiang Kai-shek, called for the restoration of Formosa to China, and reiterated the demand for Peking's entry into the United Nations? These latter accusations or tributes are true enough, but, except possibly on the issue of Formosa, they do not sharply distinguish Labor's attitude from that of Sir Winston's government.

The Tories also believe in coexistence in Asia, as was signally proved by Anthony Eden's role at Geneva. The much more crucial test was the stand which Labor would take on the SEATO pact negotiated at Manila. If Labor had condemned this plan for the protection of Asia in which most of the Asians have refused to participate, the kinship in outlook between British Labor and Nehru's India would have been sustained, and the Chinese Communists might have expected an effective change in British policy if Labor took power. Instead, once again, the official leadership was given a free hand. The outright condemnation of SEATO was defeated. And the result, almost certainly, will be that no direct challenge will be delivered to Churchill's policy in the Far East.

THESE two major decisions are indicative of the other conclusions reached at Scarborough. True, Labor fully condemned Tory imperialist policy in Cyprus. True, also, the conference approved a policy of advance in the colonial territories stated in much more glowing terms than a Tory conference would ever applaud. But few concrete decisions binding a future Labor government were reached. And the same temper prevailed in the field of domestic policy. If a new Labor government were elected tomorrow, it would not, as in 1945, be committed to a far-reaching program of social change. The tempo of action would depend on the mood of the leaders, and the mood of the leaders is cautious, temporizing, and empirical.

Whether these are the choices which the Labor Party rank and file really want is another question. Indeed, this is the vital question which is now being bitterly debated throughout the Labor movement. It is the source of the violent controversy which beats around the head of Aneurin Bevan. For years he has topped the poll in the constituency-section vote for the National Executive of the Labor Party, and five out of the six remaining places in this section have been filled by his supporters. The voters in this section are the individual members of the party throughout the country and, for the most part, its most active workers. This year Bevan surrendered his certain seat in the constituency section in order to challenge Mr. Gaitskell, who had been nominated for treasurer of the party by some of the big trade unions. Both for the treasurership and all the other twenty-odd places on the National Executive the votes of the trade unions outnumber those of the local parties some five to one. Similarly, the trade-union vote is decisive on all issues of policy.

Bevan had reached saturation point

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in the support from the constituency parties. At conference after conference they had backed him with huge majorities. But he was powerless to shape policy so long as the bulk of the trade-union vote was against him. His decision to fight for the treasurership, therefore, was part of the attempt to carry the argument into the trade unions. Normally the votes of the trade unions for the officers of the Labor Party attract little attention. They may be taken by a delegation which has had no opportunity of consulting the union membership, by an executive committee, or in effect in some cases by a powerful general secretary. This year Bevan knew his challenge was bound to fail, for several of the big unions had already made their decision in favor of Gaitskell before he decided to stand. But the contest between two different attitudes toward Labor policy has now been brought out into the open. Bevan's two-to-one defeat is not the end of a career but the beginning of a campaign to inject a much-needed dose of more active democracy into the constitution of the Labor Party.

How sore is that need was shown in the dramatic vote over German rearmament. Despite all the advantages which the machine bestows on the party leaders, their policy was carried by only 3,270,000, to 3,022,000 votes. Few people doubted that the constituency parties voted overwhelmingly against the Executive. Yet it is precisely within the local parties that the issue has been argued out most fully, while several of the trade unions cast their votes after only the most cursory consultation with their members. As if to illustrate the point in the most dramatic colors, the decision would in fact have gone the other way and the Executive have been defeated if one small trade union had not decided at the very last moment to switch its vote in defiance of its mandate.

Over the years effective power in the Labor Party has been assembled into fewer hands. Democracy has made concessions to its old enemy, bureaucracy. This was partly made inevitable by the methods of Communist conspiracy within the unions. But it has gone much too far for the health of a movement which prides itself on its democratic upbringing and instincts. Rank-and-file opinion can still make itself felt through the vote in the constituency-party section and by other means. But at Scarborough as at previous conferences it has not been able to find full expression in the effective determination of policy. The party and trade-union machine sometimes becomes the enemy of democracy just as the church is often the enemy of Christianity. The fight to end that state of affairs in the Labor Party is now on. It is a necessary prelude to the fight for establishing a democratic Socialist government in office.

REARMAMENT

A German View . . *by Gustav W. Heinemann*

WHEN I compare the political conversations I had on an earlier visit to America—in 1948—with those I had this year when I was a delegate to the meeting of the World Council of Churches at Evanston, I am struck with the fact that a much more confident tone prevailed six years ago. At that time I spoke with Secretary of State Marshall on European unity as a necessary step to Europe's economic reconstruction and on America's decision to contribute to that reconstruction by the offer of substantial economic aid. The London four-power conference of December, 1947, had ended in failure—a failure which Marshall had explained by saying, "We were unable to agree on a definition of 'Germany' "—but Washington was still confident that in the end all major differences, including the question of Germany, would be resolved.

Today this faith in peaceful solutions within the foreseeable future has been replaced by deep-seated distrust of the Eastern bloc. Americans also feel that not only Europe but their own country is now in peril. They see themselves confronted with responsibilities, both to themselves and to the rest of the world, such as they never before had to face. And they are finding to their sorrow that the other peoples of the West are not always "reliable" partners. France caused a serious setback to American plans when it rejected E. D. C.; how far the agreements reached at the London conference will repair the damage remains to be seen. As for Germany, the one question that everybody has asked me is: "Who will be Dr. Adenauer's successor?" Clearly many Americans feel that Washington foreign policy depends far too much on a single man.

The visitor from West Germany is impressed by the universal acceptance of the Federated Republic's economic renascence. He doubts, however, whether Germany's economic strength should be considered a guaranty that its military strength can be added to that of the West as against Russia. Six years ago West German rearmament was out of the question. Today it is taken for granted. This is true despite the failure of E. D. C., the uncertainties left by the London meeting, and the obvious fact that West German rearmament is a kind of time-bomb threatening to wreck any attempt at an all-European settlement.

IF MY understanding is correct, American foreign policy seeks to line up against the Soviet Union all forces that might conceivably be utilized for the purpose. World War II destroyed Germany and Japan as effective barriers against Russia; America wants to recreate the military strength of both nations and draw them into a system of

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Atlantic and Pacific alliances. This policy is obviously based on two assumptions. The first is that there exists a danger of war from Soviet aggression. This view is undoubtedly supported by the international ramification of Communist pressures but fails to recognize that the Russians think primarily in revolutionary rather than in military terms. The West may well be justified in keeping up its military strength as long as there is no general disarmament, but I think that Western emphasis on *military* preparedness is a mistake. For it means preparedness in a sphere in which the Soviet Union—for all its armaments—is least likely to prove aggressive. I am convinced that Russia is unwilling to risk its position as "the country of socialism" by starting a war, especially since its rulers are confident that the capitalist world is doomed to succumb to Bolshevism without war.

The *decisive* competition between the Western and the Eastern bloc is not in armaments but in what each side can offer its peoples in living standards and social justice. Harry Shapiro, an American journalist who has just returned from a twenty-year stay in the Soviet Union, has written that "in such a competition the men around Malenkov may prove much more dangerous enemies than Stalin and Stalinism have ever been" (*Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, March 13, 1954).

THE second basic assumption of American policy seems to me to be that the next world war will be fought mainly with conventional weapons—because neither side will dare to use the new nuclear weapons of mass destruction. That is why old-style armaments are clung to so tenaciously in Western Europe. In Germany many people think that neither the A-bomb nor the H-bomb will be used in the next war, just as poison gas was avoided in the last. I believe this is a treacherous delusion. Poison gas and atomic weapons are not strictly comparable, if only because so much greater a percentage of total armament expenditures is invested in the latter. Moreover, the new weapons are much more decisive than poison gas could ever have been.

The international-affairs section of the World Council of Churches spent a good deal of time during the Evanston sessions discussing the new weapons. A

Fitzpatrick in the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch*

European Defense Problem

report, unanimously approved by the full meeting, states:

> The development of nuclear weapons makes this an age of fear. True, peace cannot rest on fear. It is vain to think that the hydrogen bomb or its development has guaranteed peace because men will be afraid to go to war, nor can fear provide an effective restraint against the temptation to use such a decisive weapon either in hope of total victory or in the desperation of total defeat.

A war between East and West will almost certainly be fought with A-bombs and H-bombs: one side will either think it necessary to use them in order to survive or, threatened with defeat, it will want to draw the victorious enemy into the abyss of destruction. With mankind's very existence at stake, it will be impossible to keep the conflict within bounds of any kind. It has already been reported that American atomic artillery now stationed in Germany is as destructive as the Hiroshima A-bomb. The first shot fired from such a gun will mark the opening of an atomic war.

If the basic assumptions of American foreign policy are false, then a reappraisal of that policy is necessary. I believe the United States should renounce competition in armaments and use its strength to further the economic and social development of the world's backward areas. At the same time it should maintain military equality with the Soviet Union in atomic weapons until the way is clear for international disarmament.

Let us assume, for the sake of argument, that atomic weapons will not be used in the next war. Does the intensive rearmament of Western Europe, including Germany, then become justified as a defense against a possible Red Army attack? One point must be emphasized: nobody in Western Europe is interested in a defense that would turn Western Europe itself into a battlefield, least of all the Germans. Only a defense that would keep the Red Army out of Western Europe—including West Germany—can prevent the chaotic dissolution of all order in the very first days of the war. This happened in France in 1940, and in a new war similar chaos would engulf other parts of Europe, including Germany. With the first shot millions of people, remembering the horrors of World War II, would start to flee, without aim and without plan. Soviet partisans and saboteurs would contribute to the confusion. Any attempt to defend Western Europe on German soil will bring back to the Germans the traumatic shock of the past. The West must bear in mind that there is atomic artillery in Germany now but no air-raid shelters.

IT IS also questionable on other grounds whether Germany—and Japan—can really be restored as effective military factors. The panic fear which Germany inspired in its neighbors in World War II has not disappeared. Our southern, northern, and western neighbors would like to have a German army that is stronger than the Red Army; but they want it to be weaker than their own. It is this contradiction that lay at the root of the four-year dispute on E. D. C. and its final rejection. The rearmament of West Germany must therefore be accompanied by measures for the protection of Germany's neighbors. At the same time any such measures would make the Germans feel that they had been denied equality of rights and would rob the military pact of a considerable part of its value. The need to strike this delicate balance is the most formidable of the many problems faced by the experts now at work on the details of the London agreement.

There is also the danger of the rebirth of nationalism in a remilitarized Germany. The rearmament of West Germany widens rather than narrows the gap between the two Germanys and creates tensions which are fraught with peril for the whole of Europe. It is said that Western Europe cannot be defended without West German forces. But the

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decisive question is: Can it be defended *with* West German troops?

If I interpret American policy correctly, it stands for peace, even if not for peace at any price. And what does this imply? On this subject, too, a foreign visitor in America hears many things that puzzle him. The price of preserving peace can be variously estimated. But can it include the proclamation by America of such clearly aggressive aims as "roll-back" and "liberation"? What purpose can such a policy serve? And does it make sense to include the colonial possessions of the Western world in the status quo that is to be preserved? Is it justifiable for the United States to talk of defending freedom and democracy with Tito, Franco, Syngman Rhee, Chiang Kai-shek, and Bao Dai as its allies? Does not all this add up to an anti-Soviet policy in which the end sanctions many unworthy means? May not the anti-Communist forces, once let loose, precipitate war in the same way that they did under Hitler? The foreign-policy statement of the American Legion in Washington at the beginning of September cannot but recall to a German the part which similar organizations played in German politics—and are likely to play again in a rearmed Germany.

THE only alternative before us is coexistence or total war. If coexistence is chosen, certain practical precautions must be taken, including an attitude of quiet watchfulness and a willingness to make reasonable compromises. A visitor here leaves with the impression that many Americans, torn between their hatred of communism and their fear of an atomic war, are placing an unobtainable price on the preservation of peace.

The time has come to reexamine our political conceptions. Germany is obviously the key to a European settlement. The Russians will never give up their part of Germany as long as there is a chance that a united country would become part of a Western coalition. Similarly, the Soviet Union will oppose any attempt to unify Europe unless it is a truly neutral Europe.

The creation of an "independent" Europe should become the goal of Western policy. Such a Europe could never turn against the West because it is itself part of the West. But it must also never lend itself to any action against the East.

Can America, which has already done so much for the cradle of its culture, understand all this? If it does, then it will realize that a new European order must be sought outside the two power blocs. This implies, as a first and immediate step, the withdrawal of all Allied troops from Germany. Concurrently there must be created powerful guaranties that a reunited Germany shall rearm —if it is to rearm at all—only under strict control and shall in no case become part of a military coalition directed against any of its neighbors.

I realize that I have left many questions of detail still unanswered. But I believe I have outlined the basic principles which can bring peace to Europe.

CANNERY ROW REVISITED

Steinbeck and the Sardine . . *by Ward Moore*

[*When John Steinbeck's "Cannery Row" appeared nearly ten years ago, it was generally acclaimed (though not by Margaret Marshall in* The Nation*—she called it a "simulated gem" about a "nonexistent Monterey") as an authentic literary accomplishment. This year Mr. Steinbeck returns to "Doc" and the canneries in "Sweet Thursday," which gives Ward Moore, a literary critic who lives in Monterey and can walk down Cannery Row any time he likes, a chance to pick up where Miss Marshall left off. The sketches are by Bruce Ariss, a Monterey artist, who derived his inspiration from strolling down the Row.*—EDITORS THE NATION.]

Monterey, California

ONCE Monterey was not only the capital of California but its metropolis. Boston ships might neglect San Diego, San Pedro, Santa Barbara, or Yerba Buena, but they didn't sail the coast without anchoring in deceptively promising Monterey Bay. A hundred years before the Golden State sent forth oil and oranges, plastic toys and TV shows, holds could always be filled at Monterey with enough hides and tallow to make voyages profitable. (Beef, even if salted in that pre-frigidaire epoch, was too bulky to pay its way around the Horn.) Monterey was the economic as well as the political and social capital.

Gold and San Francisco, Yankee influx and the railroads—transcontinental and north-south—relegated the town to second- and then third-class status. The automobile kicked it farther down. Both the main line of the Southern Pacific and U. S. Route 101 run through Salinas, nineteen miles to the east, the hot and bustling seat of Monterey County, so firmly intrenched in its demographic and economic superiority that the Peninsula no longer resents it: Monterey meekly pays its taxes there and travels to shop at Sears or the Thrifty Drug, corporations too canny to open branches in Monterey.

For years Monterey has lived on the armed forces and the tourist trade. Except for commercial fishing—an important exception culturally but of decreasing economic moment, especially since the larger boats prefer Moss Landing on the other side of the bay—Monterey's middle class and proletariat are in service occupations; they are janitors and gas-station attendants, storekeepers and clerks, waitresses, salesmen, gardeners, real-estate dealers, repairmen, landlords, teachers, and sports-fishing crews.

Still excepting fish—the industry employs perhaps 400 men sporadically—Monterey produces nothing but perfect climate and the sight of some excellent old adobe houses. (One was recently de-

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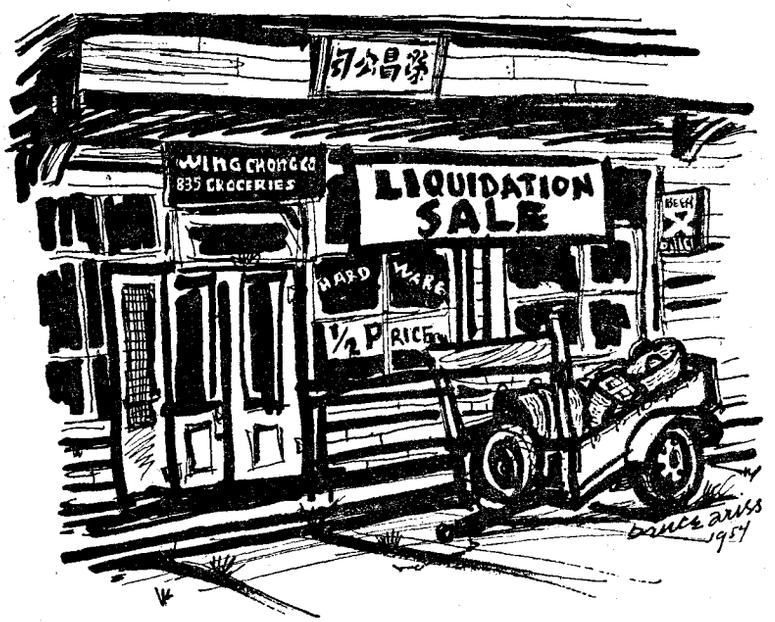
stroyed to make way for a parking lot; Monterey may be off the beaten track, but it is progressive.)

There was a time when it seemed as if the town could put aside its role of geisha girl and scullery maid. The humble pilchard, a coarse fish palatable enough when fresh, fit only for cat food canned, was easily caught in quantity and readily preserved in brine, soy or cottonseed oil, watery tomato or mustard sauce to compete with the traditional Maine, Norwegian, or Portuguese product. The canneries came, and Monterey had an Industry, was a Producer and not merely a passive parasite upon the economic body.



To both the paisanos and the "old" Americans indigenous to the Peninsula, Cannery Row was heaven-sent. Seasonal, irregular cannery work was suited to the temperament engendered by Monterey's climate and tradition. Further, it promoted a dignity on the ancient American go-to-hell basis, unavailable to those in service occupations. If Carmel was a rural Greenwich Village, Cannery Row was a proletarian bohemia.

Inevitably this bohemia had to have its Murger; fortunately or unfortunately—opinions differ among Peninsulans—it turned out to be John Steinbeck. To Steinbeck, who carries to an extreme the Hemingway small-boy nostalgia for the never-never world of comradely masculine society without women save as an occasional convenience, Cannery Row was an ideal microcosm. In it, socially at least, the infantile triumphed; Mother—the realist, the disciplinarian, the stabilizer—was excluded, and Father, if admitted at all, came as a refugee from domesticity. In Cannery Row the locale the small boy as employee justified his restiveness in casual labor; in "Cannery Row" the novel the small boy vindicated his pranks, his misdemeanors, his fear of responsibility in a glorification of perpetual hooky.

HOW documentary was "Cannery Row"? How faithful to objective reality were the details of the novel; how much license did Steinbeck take in the loosely joined sketches? Since he used an extant geography and characters with readily identifiable models, the legitimate question arises: Did his selection of some material and exclusion of some emphasize the romantic or the "real" aspects of the Row? It is significant that the reader is never taken inside a cannery or introduced to even minor characters directly involved with fish-packing and with wages and work, unions and families. In a proletarian bohemia Steinbeck chose to portray the ultra-bohemian fringe: the bums, whores, and the two professional men—the merchant, Lee Chong, rapacious and benevolent, with a tightly symbiotic relationship to the Row, and Doc, whose presence is socially and economically fortuitous.

Steinbeck's attraction to the bizarre is notable in his depiction of Doc. It is an undeniably legitimate privilege of the novelist to distort his model in order to bring out desired effects; in heightening and foreshortening the original of Doc he was merely exercising this privilege. But About Ed Ricketts, which is prefaced to "The Log from the Sea of Cortez," is not fiction, and is therefore subject to restraints not put upon the novelist. Yet in About Ed Ricketts, Steinbeck departs from objective facts, apparently to sharpen drama. These facts, particularly the manner of Ed Ricketts's death, are on record. To say, as Steinbeck does—"I am sure that many people, seeing this account, will be sure to say, 'Why, that's not true. That's not the way he was at all. He was this way and this.' And the speaker may go on to describe a person this writer did not know at all"—is merely to hedge. The complexity of any man's character is admitted, and no one can write of what is alien to him in another, but this does not excuse, in purported non-fiction, artistic distortions of speech and action, time and circumstance which are proper in fiction. Indeed, a confusion seems to have grown up in the author's mind between Doc of "Cannery Row" and Ed Ricketts on whom Doc was modeled, so that in About Ed Ricketts Steinbeck attributes to his friend many of the characteristics and actions which belonged solely to his creation. He could no longer distinguish between the two, not so much because one was based on the other as because the intimacy of creation excluded the intimacy of friendship. The character stood between the author and the man.

This confusion between fact and fancy seems to have been further compounded in "Sweet Thursday," in which Steinbeck returns to Cannery Row, possibly in dissatisfaction with the justice done to the Ed Ricketts-Doc entity, or as an act of love toward his dead friend. But now the author is no longer drawing from life in order to present his own version of reality, as in the earlier novel. In "Sweet Thursday" he has forgotten that "Cannery Row" was a fiction, an improvement upon and distillation of things seen, just as he has unconsciously forgotten that Ed Ricketts and Doc were not identical, and created by him. He has confused "Cannery Row" with the material which went into it, so that "Sweet Thursday" is drawn, not from life or even his memory of life, but from his own book, second-hand, with a consequent diminution of size and vitality. If "Cannery Row" was farce, "Sweet

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Thursday" is burlesque; if the first novel was peopled by lovable little men, the sequel is full of leprechauns; if the smell of the sardine was muted in the first, the odor of rendering sugar is overpowering in the second. Cannery Row is no longer softened by a transmuting haze of artistry—it is tidied up and prettified beyond recognition.

OSTENSIBLY "Sweet Thursday" displays the post-war, post-sardine Cannery Row. Doc lives, despite Ed Ricketts's death, but he lives to be the beneficiary of hovering solicitude, the recipient of anxious endowments, from writers' block and a sudden perception of loneliness to the affections of Suzy, a wistful and wholesome whore. Steinbeck ceases to be the poor man's Hemingway and becomes a slightly raffish Faith Baldwin.

The other adult in "Cannery Row" has been whisked from the scene. Lee Chong, Steinbeck relates gravely, has sold out his store and gone to trade with the glamorous Polynesians. In About Ed Ricketts, Lee Chong is called Wing Chong, in understandable confusion with the name of the store, "Glorious-Prosperous." There was no Chong—neither Lee nor Wing. The founder of Wing Chong was Yee Won; the business was carried on by his son, J. H. Yee, and C. M. Sam, from whom the character Lee Chong was derived. Neither Mr. Yee nor Mr. Sam has departed for the South Seas, though they have dissolved partnership and the Glorious-Prosperous store is in the process of what is possibly the slowest and most dignified liquidation in history. It has been selling out, at the moment, for more than nine months, and the end is not in sight. When it finally closes, Cannery Row will no longer have a vestige of communal life; the few who still live there will have to shop in Monterey or New Monterey, like everyone else.

The Glorious-Prosperous, like the rest of the Row, is the victim of shortsighted greed. The pilchard is going the way of the buffalo and the passenger pigeon. Large catches produced more canneries; more canneries called for larger catches. The number and size of boats and nets grew; the migration stream of the fish was charted; with insatiable zeal the schools were pursued, netted, canned, or reduced to meal—breeding stock, fry, and all. Voices raised for conservation were shouted down; regulation was avoided or evaded. Suddenly and "mysteriously" the sardine disappeared; the searching boats netted handfuls of the survivors instead of thousands of tons. If pursuit of the pitiful remnant were absolutely forbidden, the sardine could come back in time, but this idea is repugnant to those who hold to the "mysterious disappearance" theory and talk of shifting ocean currents and less plentiful plankton for the pilchards to feed on locally, though it must be obvious that the answer to the plaintive query, Where have the sardines gone? is, Into the cans.

Meanwhile the actual Cannery Row enjoys none of the shenanigans of "Sweet Thursday." Some of the canneries work part time—on anchovies, squid, mackerel, or tuna. One has burned down, leaving a hole in the wall of two-story buildings through which the Bay can be seen from the Row. One has been spruced up to accommodate a moving-and-storage company. Others are talked of as possible homes for light industry—which so far has been reluctant to pay the extra freight costs which are the penalty for not being on the main line. For the most part the canneries are empty, paint-peeling and dusty, with mocking NO ADMITTANCE; APPLY AT OFFICE signs. But the offices are closed, and the obsolete buses which once took the workers to their jobs stand rusting and flat-tired. A newly decorated "fish and steak house" attempts to lure some of the tourist trade from fishermen's wharf.

People still live on Cannery Row. Two blocks of small apartments and a scattering of weary frame houses shelter a small population. Ed Ricketts's (or Doc's) laboratory, its paint removed by the weather and its windows obscured against the curious, is in use as living quarters, the "B" of "Pacific Biological Laboratories" alone remaining to identify it. Visitors and rubberneck buses detour down the half-mile-long Row. Optimistic business men speak of the return of the sardine, basing their prophecy on a catch of four or five tons in southern waters, trucked swiftly to the canneries, which obligingly open for a few hours to receive them. But the proletarian bohemia is gone.

What does Cannery Row think of John Steinbeck? "Who?" asks one inhabitant. "Wish I had his dough," mutters another.

Doc's Laboratory

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FALL BOOK ISSUE

The American Writer, I . . . *by John W. Aldridge*

THOSE of us who are now thirty or slightly older have already outlived the literary movement in which we grew up—the movement that came to fruition in the twenties, while we were still too young to participate in it, but that seemed destined for a time in the late forties to be given new vitality and purpose by writers our own age who were then coming out of the war. The great early figures of that movement—Yeats, Joyce, Gide, Shaw, Eliot, Pound—are nearly all dead now, their works and effects abandoned to the museums and the damp hands of classical scholarship. Later figures of the second rank like Scott Fitzgerald and Thomas Wolfe, whom we thought of, ten or fifteen years ago in college, as older but still active contemporaries of ours, have already taken on the remote character of minor deities out of some vanished Augustan past. Of the best writers now in middle age and still capable of serious work, only a very few have been able to develop at all significantly those initial and, for the most part, narrow insights into modern life which secured their place in the literary world of twenty years ago. The one or two—I can think of only Faulkner and Hemingway—whose later careers have been something more than a falling off or merely a repetition of earlier promise are chronically under siege by hordes of critics bent on sacking their establishments, picking over their bones, and raising around their works sepulchers of exegesis and bibliography. Some of the lesser known and, one would suppose, more fortunate writers of the same age—the one-book novelists and former poets—who sank into obscurity right after the twenties and for years were not heard of again, have suddenly been rediscovered and crowned with the notoriety of Civil War veterans and Titanic survivors for having once belonged to the movement or figured in the memoirs of someone who did.

The situation of the younger group of novelists is far different today from what it was seven or eight years ago when they first began to appear. At the time a variety of circumstances seemed to be coming together to produce an atmosphere both exciting and liberating to new talent. The war had ended without that fatigued suspension of the will which followed after 1918 and gave rise to the earlier literature of nervelessness; and there had finally come a break—sometime in the early forties—in the tendency of the proletarian school to repeat itself endlessly in novels rank with the outmoded economics of Marx and Engels. The reading public, which while the war lasted had been more or less content to subsist on the sweetnesses of Private Hargrove and William Saroyan, was now anxious for a return to the sterner realities; and publishers were finding it profitable to cultivate writers who, fresh from the hardships of active service, seemed most likely to bring it about. There began a rather grandiose and indiscriminate exploitation of every literary effect, good or bad, in any way connected with the war, of every young man with a combat trauma or gripe that could be turned to print.

Twenty-five and thirty years earlier this kind of wholesale speculation in talent had been a natural response to the upsurge of creative activity which came on in the twenties and which quickly began to be exploited with the competitive zeal normally associated with bull-market buying in Wall Street. Publishers gambled on dozens of young writers in the hope of discovering a new Sherwood Anderson or Sinclair Lewis, and ended, in certain historic instances, by discovering Ernest Hemingway, Scott Fitzgerald, and John Dos Passos, whose successes over the years that followed were in large part responsible for the rise of the great serious reputations of such houses as Scribner's and Houghton Mifflin. But now, at the end of another war, with the precedent for early subsidy of talent thus established and vindicated, what had formerly been speculative became self-conscious, and there grew up a feeling that literary renaissance and boom were known chemical compounds that could be precipitated into being if only one followed the formula of the past and paid enough money.

FOR the enterprising publisher of the late forties this meant a mechanical repetition of all the old conjuring tricks. Once again he bought up his stable of fresh young talent, although this time in the hope of discovering a new Hemingway, Fitzgerald, or Dos Passos; and it was not surprising that most of the writers he bought were those who, by an odd process of commercialized reincarnation, most closely resembled the masters whom he hoped to replace. Nor was it any more than inevitable that the ceremonies of first publication for many of these writers should seem to be patterned increasingly after those ancient rites of fertility in which, to the accompaniment of pagan cries of trumped-up sexual ecstasy and the frantic supplication of ancestors, the effigy of the dead god—or in this case the dead reputation—was cast into Hades to be born anew in the person of youth. After a while it became hard to avoid wondering whether the process of authorship was not really becoming one of ghoulish collaboration with the dead and dying, whether the first novel of Merle Miller or Robert Lowry was not in fact a new revision of "Tender Is the Night" done by Theodore Dreiser with the help of Compton McKenzie.

Yet in spite of the extremes of mercantile silliness to which it was occasionally carried, the quasi-renaissance of the

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late forties had for a time an effect both exhilarating and wholesome on the younger writers themselves. It gave them enough money so that they were freed, very early in their careers, from the pressures of other work; and now that the war had ended along with the restrictions which it had imposed on movement, it suddenly became possible with money to live the literary life once again, to throw big parties, to travel and settle abroad, to found magazines, with an ease and directness unknown since the twenties. It was in fact one of the more ironic features of the time that the commercial interests which had generated and then exploited the prevailing atmosphere of assiduous trend-mongering and ancestor-worship had also inadvertently brought about a condition in which both the more serious and the more frivolous interests of the past could actually for the first time in years be restored and developed. The financial collapse of the thirties had led to a shrinkage of nearly all the values of the intellectual life and had reduced writers from their former high position as free producers to the status of charity cases and wards of a welfare state. Their Marxist concerns, moreover, had had the effect of temporarily anesthetizing their sense of any purpose for art beyond that of social relevance, just as, in the early forties, the official war-time view of their "responsibility," huckstered by such new patriots as Archibald MacLeish and Bernard DeVoto, had persuaded some of them to desert politics for propaganda.

But now, for those of the younger group who continued to be benefited rather than stifled or debauched by the constant iteration of the names and works of famous predecessors, the flattering juxtaposition of earlier creative decades with their own, there was set up a frame of mind and reference in which it became natural once again to speak of a serious disinterested calling of American letters and of a native tradition of excellence on which the beginning writer could take his bearings. The promising young novelist with his first book completed enjoyed not merely the customary guaranty of publication provided him by the boom but the greater advantage of feeling himself launched into history and placed almost at once in an established line of influence which perhaps he was simultaneously appointed to carry on. While it was not always obvious to him that his eminence had been concocted or that, more often than not, he was being made simply the pawn of a publicity enterprise bent on exploiting the exchange value of the past, he was nevertheless given a sense of belonging, however tentatively, to a traditional hierarchy of peers to whom the practice of literature was a common craft and faith in its importance a common motivation.

IN ANY case, by the end of the forties the opening phase of the post-war literary revival had run its course, publishing had settled down to a state of seemingly permanent inflation, and conditions became different again. The younger novelists who, three or four years previously, had written their first books in a spirit of confidence that they were entering on a new creative cycle and carrying forward an established creative tradition suddenly found themselves high and dry in a world where all they stood for seemed to have gone into eclipse and where they themselves had become premature anachronisms. Although they had, as a group, by now published a respectable body of work, including several novels of genuine distinction, and had among them such accomplished writers as Jean Stafford, Carson McCullers, John Horne Burns, Norman Mailer, Paul Bowles, and Truman Capote, they had largely failed to take the positions of authority and influence which had appeared to be opening to them only a short time before. In fact, the situation with which they were now confronted was such as to invalidate entirely the system of accession to power and prominence, the very possibility of reputation in the old sense, which had been the feature of the decades just past and on which, in the excitement of the immediate post-war years, they had come to pin their hopes. The modern literary movement had, in those years, lost nearly all its potency as a reproductive and energizing force and been slowly absorbed into the universities, where its massive indignations had cooled down to small fastidious tics experienced by graduate students in the damp undercaves of libraries, and where its great seminal ideas had been frozen and crystallized into churchly authoritarian

So Goes the Report

Out in the vast Pacific, they say,
There is a line which stepped across
Carries you back to yesterday;
And seen through the vapory ectoplasm
The sun's each colored radius
Converging there upon time's prism
Is pulled backward to reunite
In a single shaft of morning light.

There can the swollen leaf be seen
Retract into the infant bud,
Its dark dissolve to tender green;
There the gross and gravid flower
Withdraws into its maidenhood,
The day shrinks back into the hour,
And music's convoluted sound
To its beginning is unwound.

There under her first lover's hand
The woman turns once again the girl,
And man's wisdom weary-brained
Retreats into the child's bright heart.
There skin and flesh glow like the pearl,
There, yes, there!— So goes the report.
But here, though our eyes yearn for the East,
Our feet are ever pointed West.

SAMUEL YELLEN

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dogma. The leaders and apostles of the movement whom the younger group had thought of as their natural and at least spiritually living mentors appeared now to have been embalmed and mummified like ancient Egyptian priests and set up in niches to commemorate the grandeur of a vanished cult, while their works had come to be looked upon, not as models to be admired and imitated, but as sacred canonical treasures to be studied as objects of research in the science of liturgics. Literature now was a corporate body, official, institutionalized, and closed: the appearance of a new writer, the creation of a new work, outside the canon was not only irrelevant but irreverent, at best a wilful and rather nasty breach of etiquette, at worst very nearly an act of heresy. Besides, the consolidation of literary power within the universities had progressed to the point where the manufacture of new writers and works could be carried out under the controlled conditions of the laboratory and the tested and purified techniques of the masters injected like plasma directly into the bloodstreams of apprentices, enabling them to begin at once to write poems rich in ambiguity, paradox, irony, symbolism, and tension, and short stories and novels incorporating James's device of the "trapped spectator," Conrad's concealed and multiple narrators, and Joyce's parallels to the myth of Odysseus.

There was something suspect and vulgar now about a writer who worked up his own materials or who retained more than a speculative interest in the experience of his own time. To the literary men of the academy he seemed to inhabit some distastefully fetid underworld of sub-intellectual intrigue, a kind of retarded bohemian cellar, where the cold, clear light of Brooks and Warren never penetrated, and where, amid the burrowings and scramblings and titterings of life, the thin orgastic pops of violated metaphors, if heard at all, would have been mistaken for those of barmaids. But the independent writer had what was, from the academic point of view, the still more crippling defect of being unable or unwilling to keep abreast of the current developments in his field. He thought of himself, for example, as belonging to the avant-garde and as carrying forward a tradition of free creative inquiry into the spirit of his age; while the truth was that his entire conception of the avant-garde—the conception of a community of intransigent, revolutionary talents—had long since been outmoded by the rise of a new academic avant-garde conceived in the name of orthodoxy and dedicated to the principle that all writers are created equal provided they conform to the rules of the canon. As for the work of free creative inquiry into the spirit of the age, it had been purged both of freedom and of creativeness and intrusted to a special commission headquartered in the *Partisan Review,* where it became known henceforward simply as "Project X: *explication du Zeitgeist.*"

THE movement, finally, to which the independent writer naively felt himself to be still allied had not merely become institutionalized in the universities; it had passed into the receivership of the new avant-garde and been turned into capital for an official corporation of "experimental" literature, presided over by a board of director-critics, staffed by graduates of the literary workshops at Stanford and Iowa, and headquartered in the *Kenyon* and *Sewanee Reviews.* Here the process of direct exploitation of the masters of the movement—which had begun in the universities with the creation of synthetic, junior-sized Joyces, Jameses, and Kafkas—was accelerated to the point where it passed into the large-scale production of hybrid and mutated forms of those special dramatic techniques which criticism had explicated out of the works of the masters. Thus, instead of reading James, the young avant-gardist read Percy Lubbock on "The Ambassadors" and made use in his novel of Lubbock's interpretation of James's use of "point of view"; instead of reading Faulkner, he read Richard Chase on the images of line and curve in "Light in August" and began distributing through his novel, at the rate of about three to the page (that being the "holy" number), images of line and curve. He discovered in time of course that for the successful employment of these techniques some subjects served better than others: some would symbolize, others would not; some met the official specifications as to "resonance, thickness, and depth," others were dangerously experiential and naturalistic and threatened to trap him into a single level of meaning or a failure to render or evoke.

There consequently grew up a special avant-garde etiquette of subject selection which became as restrictive in its effects on the quarterlies as the clichés and stereotypes imposed by the mass audience on the commercial magazines. A primary requirement was that a short story be presented against a background of sufficient complexity and dimension to make possible the objectification of theme through the natural elements of landscape and weather—a device made mandatory after the Robert W. Stallman researches into the work of Stephen Crane and Conrad. The best stories, therefore, were those set in such locales as the wild mountain country of the West and the decadent bayou and hill country of the South, where the majestic or baroque furnishings of environment could be made to serve as correlatives for the emotional responses of character. The situations themselves which could be expected to rise out of these locales were naturally limited in kind. They tended to turn on the mechanism of the muffled psycho-religious epiphany—the canonical equivalent of Aristotle's recognition-reversal sequence—and to have to do with adolescent hayloft intrigues, the death of small pet animals on Montana ranches, the sadism of sinisterly precocious Mississippi children, the menopausal sex adventures of middle-aged gentlewomen with faithful old plantation retainers, and the sensibility crises of lonely young girls in Virginia boarding schools. Stories of this type appeared to result from the writers' calculated effort to make use of materials which were conceived by the academy to be "literary"—because rustic or bizarre—and to have been drawn out of what few timid sorties into "felt life" they themselves had had the opportunity to launch prior to their matriculations in the workshops and graduate schools.

As their memory of life faded, however, along with their capacity to feel it, many of them began exploiting the world of the academy itself; and there set in among them a species of creative incest in which the relations which normally obtain between writers and their experience were perverted into relations with the agency which instructed or supported them in the art of having relations with their experi-

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ence. The prototypal result was the work of "in-group" exposé, the academic *conte* and *roman à clef,* in which the dramatic interest centered neither in the "felt life" nor in the quality of the rendered emotion—of which there was usually none—but in the verisimilitude with which known institutions and personages were represented and satirized. And as these became in time increasingly easy to identify, it began to be evident that there existed even a formal avant-garde etiquette for scandal, a conventionalized snobbery which limited the area of satirical attack to certain selected institutions and personages—notably, to Bennington, Bard, and Sarah Lawrence Colleges, their faculties and presidents—and which ruled out places like Columbia and the Universities of Chicago, Michigan, and Wisconsin as presumably fit for investigation only in novels of a low naturalistic order or of merely reformist intent.

BY THE same token, the avant-garde writers themselves existed within carefully restricted lines of status and class. In issue after issue of the quarterlies one read the same names at the heads of stories—Randall Jarrell, Mary McCarthy, Walter Van Tilburg Clark, Eudora Welty, Saul Bellow, Elizabeth Hardwick, Flannery O'Connor, Jean Stafford, Shirley Jackson, Katherine Anne Porter, Robie Macauley—and when the quarterly reviewers devoted their characteristically scrupulous attention to fiction at all, it was almost certain to be to the work of these same writers. Those, on the other hand, who like Norman Mailer, Calder Willingham, James Jones, John Horne Burns, Irwin Shaw, Alfred Hayes, Gore Vidal, and Chandler Brossard, had come up outside the universities and had, for better or worse, remained free of affiliation except to their craft, were just as scrupulously ignored. They were apparently thought of as too unrestrainedly creative and, therefore, by an odd but typical logic, as insufficiently literary and serious. Their novels had to do with such subjects as war, race prejudice, sexual aberration, social maladjustment, neurosis, and insanity, or simply the way it was in 1945 or the winter of 1947, and these—now that the academy had attended to the burial of both the older realism and naturalism—were considered outside the province of the novel and suitable only as raw materials for sociologists, psychiatrists, and other case-workers in merely human experience.

Besides, the novel now was a classic form; it had evolved beyond the point where it could be used easily, exploratively, or imperfectly, with any hope of adapting it to the conditions of new work. All one could legally do was produce small, mathematically perfect scale-models of an institutionalized abstraction known simply as "novel," and then one had to be careful, for even in effigy the novel had at least to wear the look of a strained and suffocating greatness. It consequently came about that the majority of these younger writers, although they represented the only really fresh and independently creative element to appear in the post-war generation, found themselves cut off, at the outset of their careers, from both the established avant-garde and the centers of the one respectable critical authority to which they might have looked for guidance, understanding, and the means of serious reputation.

Oscar Wilde—After 100 Years

By Joseph Wood Krutch

CENTENARIES make strange bedfellows. Oscar Wilde was born the very year that "Walden" was published. Less incomprehensibly this was also just two years before Bernard Shaw saw the light of the same Dublin.

At forty Wilde was the best-known and most successful writer in England. At the same age Shaw was still the obscure author of mostly unpublished novels and some highly unsuccessful plays. But the race was not to the swift. A few years later Wilde's name had become unspeakable and Shaw had started the slow climb to official eminence. One had all the luck, if luck is what it was; the other was the victim of every evil chance or choice. A generation later Wilde's homosexuality might have advanced his reputation as it seems to have advanced Gide's. And one can only guess whether or not the new seriousness of Shaw, Wells, and the rest would have so easily won the day against aestheticism if the Wilde scandal had not given a death blow to the movement to which the future then seemed to belong.

Even today Wilde's reputation is ambiguous and keeps him among those writers who are persistently read and admired while still generally denied the adjective "great." "The Ballad of Reading Gaol" follows "The Rubaiyat" in every series of flashy classics aimed at the half-educated; that famous chorus lady who "already had a book" probably had "The Picture of Dorian Gray." Yet both as a man and as a writer Wilde had virtues which neither time nor scandal nor even his own inferior work has obscured. Only one of his plays is more than a period piece, but "The Importance of Being Earnest" is the finest as well as the funniest farce in the English language. His poetry may be only what his arch-enemy *Punch* once called it—"Swinburne and water." But not even too frequent quotation can obscure the fact that his epigrams run a gamut from glorious absurdity to real wisdom which no other English epigrammatist can encompass.

Few who knew him ever denied that he was, as a man, both charming and so fundamentally kindly that his shrewdest thrusts were never poisoned with the malice of a Whistler. Moreover, his moral courage was astonishing. Over and over again during the years when he was still fair game for every philistine satirist he ran the risk of being laughed at rather than with, and he triumphed over opponents as redoubtably backed by popular prejudice as *Punch* and Gilbert and Sullivan. Whether he did or did not know that his American tour had been arranged as advance publicity for "Patience" he certainly knew that nine out of ten Americans were prepared to jeer. Yet he came and he conquered—partly because he was so obviously not afraid of reporters, of Harvard students prepared to rag, or of Western miners proud of their reputation for violence. Who else would

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JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH was for many years The Nation's *drama critic. His latest book is "The Measure of Man."*

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have dared to meet Gilbert and Sullivan, spokesmen for solid England, face to face? "Parody is the tribute which mediocrity pays to genius" won the day because it was impudent, because it was witty, and, especially, because it was true.

Shaw never acknowledged two things he probably learned from Wilde—the effectiveness of paradox and the value of unfavorable publicity. But he was certainly thinking of Wilde and the failure of aestheticism when he remarked that an old morality is never destroyed by anything except a new one. Victorianism did not give way to "splendid sins." It was "transvaluated" by Shaw and his fellow-puritans. Perhaps that fact more than anything else has relegated Wilde to a second place.

Catching Up with History

BLACK POWER. By Richard Wright. Harper and Brothers. $4.

By Joyce Cary

THIS is the report of a British colony in West Africa, the Gold Coast, where Britain has lately appointed a Negro Prime Minister, Nkrumah, with large powers. As reporting, it is a first-class job and gives the best picture I've seen of an extraordinary situation.

The culture of Negro Africa is Stone Age. Nine-tenths of the people belong in mind to at least five thousand years back. And the mind, the education of a people, is what finally you have to reckon with in politics. This culture, this mind, has now been pitched into the twentieth century by no fault of Africa, or of Britain. It is the consequence simply of the speed-up of history by two great wars and the enormous technical and scientific progress of the last thirty years. Wireless alone, apart from modern economics, makes it impossible to isolate any culture from external shock, from new exciting ideas, and from the demagogue. In a series of brilliant scenes Wright shows the effects, social and political, of this violent clash.

He describes traders, black and white, each as naive as the other, and as confused by a situation which is completely new and dangerous but inevitable: juju chiefs and their households, bound still by the magic rites of the blood in service and in sacrifice; funerals where the corpse is represented in the coffin only by a cutting from nails and hair, to deceive envious spirits, the actual body being hidden in some secret place.

He describes political meetings where each family head brings his dependents, who at word of command cheer, clap, and shout for freedom. He can tell a story against himself. At a great meeting summoned by Nkrumah, he addresses the crowd on the responsibility of the Gold Coast Africans as pioneers in the fight for African freedom. The local reporters ask him for the text of his speech. He submits it to Nkrumah for approval. The Prime Minister glances over it and then stuffs it into Wright's coat pocket. The speech is censored.

Wright not only reports against himself; he writes so honestly, so directly as he feels, that he gives the material for a another book contradicting his own arguments. He tells us that the chiefs are all scoundrels but also that there is more genuine religion in tribal paganism than in the bourgeois Christian church; that Africa is in desperate need of education but Britain has been wrong in educating Africans too well. We read that Britain has shattered tribal culture and also that tribal life is breaking up because the people find it a bore and rush to the towns.

This latter is, of course, the significant fact. Tribal life is inconceivably narrow and boring—a combination of totalitarian government and authoritarian church in their most oppressive forms, a system that has succeeded with the help of the climate in preventing almost all progress. But humanity cannot stand boredom. Its imagination revolts instinctively and incessantly against the blimp. It may worship and tremble, but give it the smallest chance to escape and it will fly. So the tribes break up as soon as any paramount power establishes peace, stops slave raiding, and gives protection to the individual. The consequence is an immense growth in the towns—especially any town with industry, cinemas, shops—and enormous slums, more difficult to control even than the Negro districts of Chicago or New York. I say slums, but they are slums only to the European mind; to the African escaped from the tribe they are dwelling places full of delights, above all of freedom.

Governments in Africa, whatever they are, have the choice between seeing the tribes break, the slums grow, or bringing in legislation to control the movements of the people. And repression in Africa, especially in Africa's present explosive mood, can very easily produce shooting, which means more repression. How are you going to maintain the tribe by police action? How are you going to convey tribesmen with a Stone Age mind through developments that in Europe took thousands of years, fast enough to catch up with history?

WHEN I joined the African service forty years ago, I was instructed that our aim was to prepare Africans for self-government by the development of their own native institutions—that is, we were to attempt to give Africa the social history of all civilized nations but to speed up the process as much as possible, without destroying our means. This limitation was highly practical. I found my local judge taking bribes. But I did not sack him. I had been instructed that almost all African judges took presents; the question was whether he gave fair judgments. Also whether I could find a better judge, for men of the necessary education were very scarce.

So too among primitive pagans chiefs were kept in power but given councilors who spoke for various sections of the people—the first step toward popular representation.

This plan for West Africa brought about smooth and rapid progress: that is to say, it gave the primitive administration we found as much development in forty years as primitive Europe accomplished in a couple of centuries. Of course we had the advantage over the Dark Ages of modern techniques, a trained staff, and the telegraph.

But then there was the war, immense economic disturbance, slumps—the same political turmoil that fell upon the whole world, India, China, South America.

Nkrumah, on the Gold Coast, demands, of course, complete independ-

JOYCE CARY, the well-known English novelist, has also written several books of political philosophy.

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ence, but he has no other choice. As a nationalist and a demagogue he is obliged to do so or some other demagogue would overbid him.

Democracy, of course, is impossible in any state where 90 per cent of the people are illiterate. It exists only in literate and industrialized nations with a powerful middle class and organized unions capable of standing up to central government. All other states are dictatorships more or less disguised. Nkrumah will have to be a dictator whether he likes it or not, and the question is whether he has the kind of genius which Ataturk brought to a much less difficult problem in Turkey, with a far greater educated class to help him.

Wright himself vividly pictures this difficulty, as he does all the others which face an African national government—except one, the rising population. Yet this by itself can smash all efforts, however well organized, to raise standards of living and education.

Population in Africa is increasing fast, and the country as a whole is poor in soil, difficult in climate, full of deserts. The battle for land is already acute. Mau Mau is one consequence, and the elements of Mau Mau are present everywhere, in the breaking tribe, and in the shape of the primitive mind. For the mind is still the mind of the tribal mass and will be so long after the tribal sanctions which controlled its repressed passions and neurotic panics are no more.

Wright's own answers to these political conundrums are offered to Nkrumah in an open letter. He urges him to sacrifice a generation, and not to be afraid of *militarism,* or *regimentation.*

The author has rejected the party, but his political thinking still belongs to communism. He imagines that violence, cruelty, injustice, and some clever lying can achieve a new civilization. But this is false. They can only produce new forms of oppression, new totalitarian states, which, because they are founded on oppression, face exactly the same difficulties as the ones they replace. If they do not educate, if they prevent the entrance of new ideas, new techniques, they stagnate and are finally destroyed by some outer force. If they educate, organize, develop, they generate large classes of rebels, more or less secret, who sooner or later will destroy them from within. Russia in the years since 1917 has had four or five internal revolutions, executed dozens of rebel leaders, purged thousands of their followers. And it is probably more unstable now, as a regime, than at any time before.

There are no easy answers in politics, especially nowadays. We are still groping our way, and need, above all, the facts of the new situation, facts all the harder to get because of universal propaganda, the practice, learned from Communist and Fascist alike, of the big lie. That is why books like this of Wright's are so valuable—so far, that is, as they give facts, and so far as the facts can be distinguished from the bias. Wright is so honest a reporter, so vivid a writer, that this is easily done in the course of reading.

It would be a public service if he could give us a similar report on Liberia, where a Negro government has been in full independent power for more than a century.

A Great Victorian Intelligence

THE GEORGE ELIOT LETTERS. Edited by Gordon S. Haight. Yale University Press. Three Volumes. $20.

By George Dangerfield

WRITING about George Eliot years after her death, when her fame had undergone an almost total eclipse, Edmund Gosse recalled that, as a young man in the year 1876, he used occasionally to see her driving through the streets of northwest London in her victoria. Beside her sat her lover, George Henry Lewes, prematurely aging, "satyr-like," vivacious: he and she had become, by a typically Victorian paradox, a venerable institution. Eliot herself was "a large thickset sibyl, dreamy and immobile," whose plain heavy features were incongruously surmounted by a frivolous Parisian hat. There was, Gosse wrote, "something pathetic and provincial" about her.

These words are both a memory and a judgment. Of course, she was provincial, but not quite in the pejorative sense

GEORGE DANGERFIELD is the author of "The Era of Good Feelings" and other books.

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that Gosse gives to the word. To be sure, he had some justification. Her novels were ponderous; they were didactic; they even had a taint of moral vulgarity—she was inclined to grade her heroines socially in accordance with their state of moral refinement.

But this is to talk about accidentals, whereas Gosse thought he was talking about essentials—about the vulgarization of genius and the misdirection of intelligence. If today, however reluctantly, we admit her once again to the company of great English novelists, we do so in some measure because of her deep provincialism. Her most persistent theme—"the stealthy convergence of human lots . . . a slow preparation of effects from one life upon another"—rose from her remembered experience of the complex and subtly changing relations between municipal town and country parish, between Church and Chapel, squirearchy and yeomanry, artisan and laborer. And the tragic element in "The Mill on the Floss" and in "Middlemarch" is partly the result of a clash between the rural-provincial world, where everybody knew his place, and the emerging urban genteel world, where nobody really had any place to know. In "The Mill on the Floss," Maggie Tulliver—an idealization of George Eliot in her youth—is a displaced person.

Displacement and replacement—alienation and reconciliation—are central to George Eliot's life and to these "Letters." It has rightly been said that she "hit straight at the main problem of the age, the reconciliation of the ethics of belief with the state of unbelief." But the problem was a *main* one because it was not only, and even not primarily, religious. Her agnostic ethic, as she says in one of her letters, was not aimed at dogmas or theists. She was really writing for people who had been condemned by the unsettling freedom of laissez faire to private cells of doubt, insecurity, guilt, and loneliness. She was one of these people herself.

THE great merit of this three-volume edition—there are three more volumes to come—is that it charts an intellectual and spiritual journey along one of the high roads of nineteenth-century English history—the rise of the urban middle classes and the drift to the towns. It is magnificently edited. George Eliot was not a born letter-writer. She reveals herself with reluctance and her external world with difficulty. Professor Haight's annotations are not only learned, as they would have to be, since he is dealing with one of the great Victorian intelligences; they are also terse and illuminating. They turn a difficult and cumbrous text into a unique guidebook for the social historian, the biographer, and the critic.

The first volume, beginning with the year 1836, is perhaps the most instructive. It introduces Mary Ann Evans at the age of seventeen. A Warwickshire girl, daughter of a humble estate agent, she has lost her rough country dialect at two boarding schools and has acquired a fervent Evangelical pietism. Lonely and self-willed, she lives in a world of make-believe. Eternity stalks her, warning her that any self-indulgence may have fearful consequences; and she, in turn, is anxious to instruct her correspondents—the chief of them is a former schoolmistress—concerning the providential aspects of infant mortality, sickness, sorrow, and bad weather.

This alarming hypocrisy—in the literal sense of *acting*—nourished, however, the germ of a rational ethic. The Evangelicals believed that the living church was an aggregation of individuals, each one responsible for his own salvation. George Eliot retained this concept of personal salvation in her novels: all she did was to place it squarely in this world. With it she yoked her stern concept of duty. For the personal God she substituted a non-personal nature, a knowledge of whose "irreversible laws within and without" it was the duty of man to acquire.

For duty, too, is central to her novels and her life. In the early pietistic letters it appears as the denial of pleasure. In her more mature thinking it becomes the renunciation of the self. Thus poor passionate Maggie Tulliver receives the "severe monotonous warning" that "by forsaking the simple rule of renunciation, she was throwing herself under the seductive guidance of illimitable claims." To become aware of one's relatedness to others in the moral order—and therefore of the interdependence of things in the natural order—one must deny some of the most pressing claims of the ego. It is no wonder that in these "Letters" she harps on the word "resignation"; or

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that in her novels her bleak but just ethic is best worked out in the lives of humble, or obscure, or frustrated people.

As the first volume ends, she has become a free-thinker and has occupied herself—it is characteristically at once a challenge and a penance—with her masterly translation of Strauss's "Leben Jesu." After her father's death she drifts to Coventry and then to London, where she becomes subeditor of the progressive *Westminster Review*. The second and third volumes—1852-1861—reveal the world of a mid-Victorian intellectual and novelist.

The life of intellectuals in the fifties was not an easy one. They had to depend for their living, often a very meager one, upon the whims of the reading public. They had to be not only versatile and intelligible but also palatable; not only professionals but also professional ladies and gentlemen. The vast respectability of an era closed upon their heterodoxies like a fist. Between its fingers here and there, extruded the head of a person of genius.

Eventually Miss Evans became such a person. But first she had—was it the result of translating Feuerbach?—to run away with a married man, George Henry Lewes. Thereafter, as we see in these "Letters," her world became a very narrow one. It was in rented rooms, in seaside lodgings, in foreign *pensions* and suburban villas that her vast intelligence absorbed the intellectual history of her time; that she endured her headaches and her colds and her fits of despondency; that the selfless devotion of Lewes encouraged her to write her novels and consoled her in her agonies of self-doubt; that she made a great deal of money and bullied her publisher; that she turned slowly and rather formidably into a national figure called George Eliot.

The publication of these "Letters" is very timely, for, slowly and formidably, she is at last emerging from her eclipse. There are many reasons for this, but surely one of the main ones is that her concept of moral duty was also a concept of social relatedness. For all their bleakness, for all their heavy Victorian furnishings, her novels offer a superb and secular insight into the brotherhood of man.

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FEAR THE ACCUSER. By Dan Gillmor. Abelard-Schuman. $3.

By Arthur Garfield Hays

GUILT by accusation has replaced guilt by association. Said Edward Livingston, in his speech opposing the Alien and Sedition bills of 1798: "Fear officiates as accuser, and suspicion is the only evidence that is heard."

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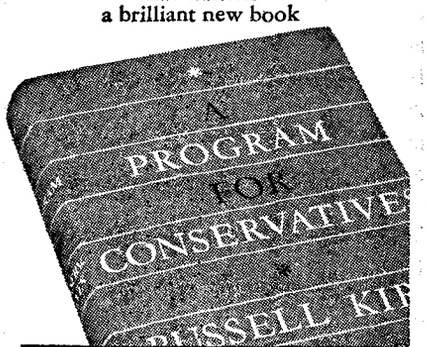

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espionage in the Army Signal Corps." On December 10 the New York *Times* quoted McCarthy as saying he had "no real hope of proving espionage. . . . It is not our function to develop cases of espionage."

What evidence, if any, was presented by Brownell to back up his statement that Harry Dexter White was a Russian agent and known to be such by the executive department that employed him? Just what did Brownell say? Just what did J. Edgar Hoover say? What were the supporting documents? Why was not White indicted by the grand jury which investigated him? The statement was made that substantiating evidence from wire-tapping was not admissible in court. But this so-called evidence was never made public. Elizabeth Bentley was vouched for by the F. B. I. as a reliable witness. We all know that time and again she has been caught in inconsistencies and lies. But what were they? Who were the witnesses against her? What did they say?

Dan Gillmor has done a prodigious job of research and analysis. In view of the mass of contradictory testimony, misleading headlines, bulldozing examinations, competition of investigators to be the first to excite suspicion, we owe a debt of gratitude for a book which not only is interesting but gives us the source material to show up the inanities of the accusers.

The book is chock-full-o'-nuts. I refer not only to the succulent bits of information but also to the individual fear-mongers.

A Solid Figure, Faintly Comic

MY NAME IS TOM CONNALLY. By Senator Tom Connally as told to Alfred Steinberg. Thomas Y. Crowell Company. $5.

By Stanley Walker

IT IS the custom in many respectable quarters today to smile condescendingly when the name of Tom Connally of Texas is mentioned. His vast talents for fustian and bumbling, his gassy disquisitions, his painful writhings in the cause of party loyalty, his old-fashioned attempts at homely humor, his fancy haberdashery—all these combined to make a figure which, notwithstanding certain solid qualities, must remain more than faintly on the comic side.

The less critical admirers of Thomas Terry Connally have professed to see in him traits that remind them of John C. Calhoun and Daniel Webster. No one need take such comparisons too seriously; in his twenty-four years in the Senate he betrayed neither the unflinching principles of Calhoun nor the magnificent diction of Webster. Even in his own time the silver-tongued Henry Ashurst was a more deft performer on the wood winds, and William E. Borah was a cut above Texas Tom as a powerful debater.

The truth seems to be that Mr. Connally from first to last was nine-tenths shrewd politician; the rest was something resembling statesmanship at times, combined with a congenital, irresistible itch to impersonate Fred Allen's Senator Claghorn. Some experts have argued, indeed, that he *was* Claghorn, a diagnosis which seems unnecessarily cruel.

Mr. Connally's account of Mr. Connally's life and times is a "what-is-it" sort of book, not easy to classify. Often it is straightforward, patently sincere, and even appealing; again it is evasive and foggy, larded tastefully with back-country jokes and the bright sayings of the inevitable Texas "colored man." Well, why not? That, as Claghorn himself might put it, is Life, ain't it, son? Although this is an "as-told-to" book, the hand of the ghost writer is mercifully absent. Mr. Steinberg, the collaborator, keeps himself entirely out of the picture and was apparently content to serve merely as recorder and copy editor. The result therefore is pure Tom Connally, and exceedingly valuable stuff for connoisseurs of American politics and students of the United States Senate, or Cave of the Winds.

This is primarily the story of the relatively poor boy, rather handsome, who got an education of sorts, practiced law, and then went into politics—going onward and upward until he was a familiar figure whose voice was heard in councils that affected the whole world. It is the story of a staunch Democrat in whose eyes the Republican Party has been generally arrayed against common sense, decency, and the noble aspirations of mankind. He prefers the Democratic Presidents—Jefferson, Jackson, Cleveland, Wilson, F. D. Roosevelt, and Truman—in all their dissimilarities and contradictions to anything that the Republicans have brought forth. It would be easy to dismiss such a man with the ugly label of "party hack," but it would be unfair and untrue. There were at least a few times when he showed a definite trace of independent spirit, even of downright courage.

Tom Connally fought the Klan in Texas when the Klan was powerful and when lesser men cringed or kept silent. He stuck with Al Smith in 1928 when Texas, for the most ignoble of reasons, was voting for Herbert Hoover. He favored selective service in both great wars, going against some of the most powerful men of his own party. When Roosevelt brought forward his court-packing scheme, Connally opposed it, not quietly or covertly, but in a loud voice—even making a strong speech before the Texas legislature to clarify his position. No matter how one may view these acts today, they were not the acts of either a foolish caricature or a poltroon. Likewise, Connally's contribution to the great experiment of the United Nations—wise or not—is nothing to be dismissed with a smile or a sneer.

THERE is an undertone of sadness as Mr. Connally comes to the fateful year of 1952, when he visited Texas and decided not to run for reelection. He insists he could have been elected, but the cost would have been great and the campaign killing for a man of his age. Maybe. But a new generation had come along in Texas. Texas did not like Harry Truman. The two big shots in Texas now were Governor Allan Shivers and the state Attorney General, Price Daniel—Daniel now sits quietly in Connally's old seat in the Senate and Shivers has just been elected to an unprecedented third term as governor. Old Tom was told, as politely as possible, that he was through. The straw polls were running heavily against him everywhere. The big-money boys hemmed

STANLEY WALKER is a Texas rancher and free-lance writer. More biographical information about him will be found in The Nation's *Bulletin Board on another page of this issue.*

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and hawed and looked the other way; they loved old Tom—but. And to the newer generation Mr. Connally was merely an odd relic of another day. His fancy clothes were merely funny; his beautiful curl of hair at the medulla oblongata seemed a bit of affectation; the rivet in his neck—which some say he borrowed from the late Senator Jim Watson of Indiana—gave him an air of pomposity which, as the saying has it, was quite un-Texan. And as the fine old "colored men" around the square in Marlin would put it, "Old Tom must have been eatin' high on the hog. He sure has packed on the tallow." Anyhow, it was time to quit. But he didn't come back to the hot springs of his beloved home town of Marlin. He stayed in Washington; he doesn't say what he is doing there.

Mr. Connally, in this absorbing and instructive book, gives unexpected judgments of various persons. For one thing, he says he always discounted Arthur Vandenberg's conversion from isolationism, and never trusted Vandenberg. He does not mention the younger Henry Cabot Lodge at all. There is nothing about Bilbo or McCarthy; nothing about the egregious W. Lee (Pass-the-Biscuits) O'Daniel, who was the junior Senator from Texas for six years; and, for that matter, nothing about the present Democratic Leader, Senator Lyndon B. Johnson of Texas. Curious, these omissions.

It would be a low sort of cheating not to give an example of the rapier Connally wit: Once, when Henry Wallace was being questioned by a Senate committee on Russian relations, Wallace warned against putting Russia in a position where it would react like a "cornered beast." Quick as a flash old Tom cut in with: "Who said anything about corned beef?" And that, he says, neatly disposed of Mr. Wallace.

And oratory: In 1936, at the time of the observance of the hundredth anniversary of the independence of Texas from Mexico, Mr. Connally made a Senate speech which he ended thus: "Where is bronze stout enough; where is granite firm enough; where is marble white enough in chiseled figure or molded form to portray its grandeur?"

It was Borah himself who rushed over to say, "Webster never said anything finer." In retrospect, Mr. Connally is

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gracious enough to add, "I suspect Webster did." (Cries of "No! No!")

There is one baffling omission, a mysterious thing, which is sure to puzzle Texas fans. Senator Connally, in the earlier parts of the book, mentions his son Ben several times with becoming pride and affection. But the last mention of the son is on page 179. Strangers are sure to ask: "What in the world ever became of little Ben? Was he kidnaped? Did he vanish into the Texas sunset?" No. Little Ben did very well. All of a sudden, while his Pappy was still in the United States Senate, Little Ben, a moderately obscure lawyer but a very nice fellow, was appointed a federal district judge. Now how the hell do you suppose that happened? The man doesn't say.

The Paradox of MacArthur

MACARTHUR—1941-1951. By Major General Charles A. Willoughby and John Chamberlain. McGraw-Hill. $5.75.

By Mark Gayn

FOR the last fifteen years of his long military career Douglas MacArthur was an odd, often intractable, and always memorable figure. He was also the greatest paradox ever to wear a United States army uniform. A general of brilliance and daring, he was closely linked with two of the worst calamities to befall American arms in the twentieth century—at Bataan and below the Yalu. A commander who demanded absolute loyalty from his subordinates, he denied loyalty to his own commander-in-chief and operated as an independent pro-consul in remote territories. A soldier, he hungered to be a policy-maker and a politician. A national hero, he was rejected by the electorate whenever his name appeared on the ballot. Finally, more probably than any other American political figure, he smarted under criticism, demanded adulation, and maintained a busy corps of myth-makers.

It is strange, therefore, that there are more good books in American homes on, say, Rommel than on this colorful and often tragic American. At the moment, I can think of only one first-rate study of MacArthur, Louis Morton's "The Fall of the Philippines," and that one dealt with but a small segment of the General's career.

At first glance, the newest volume on MacArthur has much to commend it. Its author is Major General Willoughby, who served as MacArthur's intelligence officer for ten years, belonged to the "inner circle" in Tokyo, and was involved in some of the MacArthurian controversies. Its authenticity is supported by the author's statement that the book was "initially undertaken with the encouragement of General MacArthur; it is expanded from the original group of ten chapters which were read and annotated by him." And to add literary gloss to the work, Willoughby had enlisted the help of John Chamberlain, at whose feet I sat twenty years ago, when he taught literary criticism at the Columbia School of Journalism.

CONSIDERING all this, the volume is disappointing. It traces MacArthur's career in 1941-51 with geographic felicity. It records all his campaigns, quotes from numerous staff studies, and reports some minor but fascinating episodes of the Pacific war. But the book remains a chronicle of battles rather than a flesh-and-sinew portrait of a complex personality. The image is one-dimensional but not for lack of devotion. MacArthur is repeatedly likened to Napoleon. No commander in history, the authors insist, "rose to greater heights of genius" than MacArthur in the early days of the Korean war. MacArthur's "I shall return" is said to have been "on every man's lips [in the Philippines, and] . . . whispered in children's prayers." The authors also reverentially quote some of MacArthur's purple prose, on which his ghost writers used to expend so much effort. But the adjectival writing is no substitute for depth, for candor, or for a touch of analytical quality.

Still, these shortcomings could be ignored had this been a genuine contribution to history. It is not. It is argumentative and often pettily malicious. It adds little to our knowledge of the Pacific war, and in some checkable instances it distorts history cruelly—for instance, in General Willoughby's recital of how our B-17's were caught and destroyed on Clark Field some ten hours after MacArthur's chief of staff was notified of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. Compare General MacArthur's statement in the Willoughby book that he never considered raiding the Japanese air bases on Formosa, and his insistence that he was forbidden to initiate hostilities against the Japanese, with the record cited in Louis Morton's careful study. General MacArthur, Mr. Morton notes, did have full authority to act, was expressly authorized to make "air raids against Japanese forces and installations," and had in fact sent a radio to Washington that same day reporting that he would raid Formosa the following morning. The Japanese did not wait.

The distortion goes on right up to the disastrous drive to the Yalu. General Willoughby insists MacArthur did anticipate Red China's entry into the war, suggests that the central intelligence authority might be held to blame, maintains that MacArthur did not tell President Truman at Wake Island that the Chinese would stay out of the war. Flushed with victory, MacArthur pressed his attack toward the Yalu, although in late October he had been told that General Walker's supplies were running low and as early as November 2 had evidence of the presence of Chinese troops in Korea. General MacArthur, according to Willoughby, considered the consequent retreat operation as "one of his best . . . if not the best!" The casualties, Willoughby notes, were held down to only 13,000—a figure which disingenuously ignores the ghastly South Korean losses.

WHY did the Chinese enter the war? Willoughby quotes, with obvious approval, a staff commentary on the Wake Island meeting:

> How little did MacArthur realize that by one process or another it would be conveyed to the Red Chinese that even though they entered the fray in large forces, it would be under the sanctuary of being immune from any destructive action by our military forces from within their own areas; that not even to save the lives of our men or insure the safety of our army would we permit the air force to drop the atom bomb on military targets. . . . That the Red Chinese commander apparently knew such a decision would be forthcom-

MARK GAYN is the author of "Japan Diary" and "The War in the Pacific."

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ing while General MacArthur did not, represents one of the blackest pages ever recorded.

(This typical staff memo in itself casts an interesting light on the *mores* prevailing in MacArthur's headquarters.)

The dubious historical record goes on, with sly innuendos against Truman and Acheson, against General Bradley, against the United States navy and air force, against Britain—which is suspected of inspiring MacArthur's dismissal because it wanted to put an economic vise on Japan—and even against the War Crimes Tribunal, "the work of the artisans of Yalta, Tehran, and Potsdam." It is a monotonous recital of grievances, real or fancied, written with a minimum of grace and a maximum of insinuation. It helps to explain why General Willoughby, according to *Time*, at one time considered leaving these socialistic shores for the serenity of Spain. But it does not qualify either as history or as rewarding biography. At best, this is typical Tokyo-style myth-making.

Trygve Lie's Apologia

IN THE CAUSE OF PEACE. By Trygve Lie. The Macmillan Company. $6.

By Richard Friedlich

IT IS a year and a half now since Trygve Lie ended his seven-year career as the first Secretary General of the United Nations. That career ended on a decidedly low note, and assessments of his contribution to international diplomacy were generally attuned to the latest unflattering impression of him. But the intervening months have made it easier to take a more objective view. And Lie's eminently readable 448-page "apologia" will help mightily to insure that he gets his due, though it will also reemphasize the personal shortcomings that accounted for the mistakes for which he has been rightly censured.

The reason for the lowness of Lie's prestige when he finally left office was his gross mishandling of the purge of alleged Communists and Communist sympathizers from his four-thousand-man staff. Admittedly, it was the most difficult sort of problem for a U. N. chief to handle, given the state of American public thinking on the subject and the overriding requirement that the moral issues be balanced against the necessity of saving the organization, so dependent on United States support, from outright extinction. But the burly Norwegian Social Democrat went about his task in the clumsiest fashion—seeking to sweep the mess under the rug, as though such a thing were possible; antagonizing the press corps, which might have helped him, by indignantly denying many accurate accounts of what he was up to; waiting much too long to explain his stand with any degree of candor and thereby allowing the morale of his uncertain staff to drop to frightful depths; carrying his policy of expediency to lengths far beyond those that could be deemed necessary to protect the organization from potentially fatal Congressional reprisals.

In his chapter on The Communist Issue in the Secretariat, Lie says, "Being human, I of course made mistakes." But that is as far as he will go in dropping his mantle of self-justification. He neglects to specify those mistakes and so to set the record straight.

What Lie lacked in candor and ability to admit mistakes was largely counterbalanced, especially in the earlier years, by political courage and some strong, almost stubborn convictions. He gives a lucid account of his unwavering support of the U. N. decision that led to the creation of Israel. And he tells a hitherto-unpublicized story of how he proposed—unsuccessfully—to American delegate Warren R. Austin in the spring of 1949 that both of them resign in protest against a United States proposal to drop the U. N.-approved partition of Palestine for a trusteeship scheme.

Throughout his career Lie energetically shunned the role of simple administrator to which some nations—he cites Britain especially—would have largely relegated him. Instead, he sought to make the most of powers which the U. N. charter delegated to him. Among the more significant examples of this bent were his pre-Korean campaign to

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win a U. N. seat for the Chinese Communists, his peace mission to the four major world capitals just before the Korean outbreak, and his unhesitating condemnation of the North Korean aggression. The detailed recitals of his reasoning on these issues are valuable contributions to the historical record, though they provide little new insight for the U. N. expert. His story of his 1950 meeting with Stalin has the fascination that almost any such story must have.

In his account of the pre-Korean battle over Chinese membership Lie gives the first official confirmation of a report that made the rounds at the time and throws significant light on the attitude of the State Department. The United States officially took the stand then that it opposed Red China's admission but would not use the veto if the required majority of seven Council members decided otherwise. The United States also sought to spread the impression that it was not pressuring any Council members to vote one way or another. But there were reports that energetic steps had been taken to reverse a decision by Ecuador to vote for seating Peking representatives. Lie says:

> I had expected that the United States would refrain from exerting pressure against the seating of Peking. I was wrong. The State Department proceeded to take off on an entirely different course, bringing its influence to bear (I was reliably informed) on one of the Latin American lands which, in the light of my memorandum, had planned to support the seating of the Chinese Communists in the Security Council.

This writer remembers confronting Secretary Acheson with the report when the Secretary met reporters aboard ship on his return from a London meeting of the Western foreign ministers. Acheson flatly denied the story, and it would be interesting to know whether he was deliberately seeking to mislead the press or whether some department underling was "making" policy without knowledge of his superiors.

Lie wonders whether there would have been a Korean war if the Red Chinese had been given a U. N. seat in that fateful spring of 1950 and quotes a 1954 speech by British delegate Sir Gladwyn Jebb raising the same unanswerable question.

This writer is inclined to view the point as somewhat academic on the theory that overt local Communist aggression was bound to come somewhere —if not in Korea, somewhere else— since the Communists had not yet been convinced, as Korea did convince them, that the West would resist. It appears doubtful whether Red China's bid for a U. N. seat affected the problem as directly as Lie and Jebb suggest.

Selected New Books

European Politics

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION 1788-1792. By Gaetano Salvemini. Translated by I. M. Rawson. Holt. $5. A revised version, and the first English translation, of a fascinating work first published in Italy in 1905 and long a classic on the Continent. The author has since become the "grand old man" of anti-Fascism and the dean of Italian historians. Salvemini at his best.

THE DEATH OF THE FOURTH REPUBLIC. By Ronald Matthews. Praeger. $5. A British journalist in Paris, 1944-53, here gives us an immensely readable and informative history and diagnosis of the betrayal of the Liberation and the sickness of post-war France.

POLITICS OF BELIEF IN NINETEENTH CENTURY FRANCE. By Philip Spencer. Grove Press. $6. The author of the best English biography of Flaubert sensitively and searchingly explores the efforts of three French Catholic leaders—Father Lacordaire, Abbé Michon, and journalist Louis Veuillot—to reconcile their church with republicanism, liberalism, and social reform. The story of their failure vividly illuminates the issues between clericalism and anti-clericalism.

THE LEGAL COMMUNITY OF MANKIND. By Walter B. Schiffer. Columbia. $5.50. This posthumous work by an exiled German jurist is an erudite and valuable contribution to the history of ideas in the fields of international law and world government. It examines the concept of natural law in the writings of Grotius, Pufendorf, and Wolff and the ideas of progress and collective security. The author concludes that the U. N., like the League before it, represents an attempt to "get everything for nothing." FREDERICK L. SCHUMAN

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"Freedom Through Truth for Service"

FIFTY YEARS IN CHINA. By John Leighton Stuart. Random House. $5.

By O. Edmund Clubb

JOHN LEIGHTON STUART, being human, must have wanted his memoirs to be a uniformly personal distillation of his rich experience and ripe philosophy, including particularly his deepest feelings for the Chinese people and their culture. He reports that the first part of his account was in fact written through the years. But misfortune prevented his completing the work unaided: in 1949, shortly after returning from China, he suffered a stroke from which he never fully recovered. So in his foreword he extends credit to Dr. Stanley K. Hornbeck for collaboration on the three concluding chapters (the post-China phase) and to Mr. Philip Fugh as "the impresario" of the work. The chronicle is his, but the narration was avowedly a joint effort.

In his role as missionary-educator Dr. Stuart stands out as the scholar who has absorbed much of China's thought and spirit and possesses deep awareness of the country's tortuous political currents. In the development of the institution with which his name will always be associated in China—Yenching University—he manifested both the flexibility of the born negotiator and a broad humanism. It was at Yenching that he "awoke to the crucial importance of better international understanding in securing peace and in leading ultimately to some form of world community," and he had thought of broadening the university's scope in service of this concept.

The Pacific war interrupted the educator's career with internment. Then, in July, 1946, Dr. Stuart was projected suddenly into the American ambassadorship, to aid General Marshall in mediation between the Nationalist and Communist sides in China. His book unsparingly criticizes both parties to the civil dispute. Those criticisms will not be new to students of the China scene. But it is requisite to note that a number of factual errors and chronological confusions have crept into this account, and that regrettably—given especially the importance these memoirs will naturally have for American thinking on the 1945-49 period—some integral parts of the picture are missing.

However, the present dominant fact is that the mediation undertaken progressively by General Hurley, Marshall, and Stuart failed to prolong into the post-war period the Nationalist-Communist collaboration that had been in effect, at least technically, since 1937. When Ambassador Stuart left China in August, 1949, the Nationalist armies were shattered and the Communists were in Nanking. In retrospect, he characterizes our China policy as being "hesitant or wavering" all through 1947, and suggests that a more positive policy might have won greater success. An-

O. EDMUND CLUBB, a retired American foreign-service officer, spent twenty years in Far Eastern posts.

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other sometime educator-diplomat, Dr. Hu Shih, in an introduction to the memoirs quotes Pontius Pilate and puts the matter in different, stronger words: "The United States was not 'innocent of the blood' of fallen China."

The question of responsibility for past events leads naturally to the problem posed in the final chapter: The United States and China: What Policy Now? Dr. Stuart holds generally that "to have a sound policy regarding any country or region we must first have a sound policy regarding the world as a whole." The specific proposals that follow are nevertheless not supported by reference to either world policy or Asia policy but limited instead to Formosa and the China mainland. The proposed policy envisages continued support of the National government, no toleration of Communist conquest of Formosa, non-recognition of the Peking government, opposition to Peking's occupancy of China's U. N. seat, and no trade with areas under Peking's jurisdiction. "Containment" and non-intercourse are to succeed the Open Door policy.

That there are schisms in American opinion regarding both past and present in China is notorious. But one point is incontrovertible: by 1950 China had been undergoing for a full century the throes of massive change under the impact of new concepts and techniques—many of them introduced by merchants and missionaries from the Occident. Hu Shih in 1924 described his country's transformation: "A new China is being born. . . . It is no slavish worship of the Western civilization that we are witnessing but the rebirth of an old civilization under the influence of a new impulse and a new attitude which direct contact with the ideas and methods of the modern world has produced."

The advent of modern Asian nationalism and the practical disappearance of colonialism in Asia, combined with China's new orientation, undeniably confront American policy-makers with a task of basic revision. In logic, an effective China policy should further attainment of American objectives in Asia as a whole, with the objectives determined by the national welfare and our global interests. The policy outlined in Dr. Stuart's memoirs is in general line with current American practice. Whether it is the best possible long-term policy would seem now urgently to require sober, careful study.

The memoirs thus end in an area of controversy. But Dr. Stuart had struck a more characteristic note in an earlier observation that "the preservation of China's national freedom and of her fine national culture is vitally related to the peace of the Pacific and the progressive welfare of all mankind. To this cause my life has been devoted." Dr. Stuart's memoirs incorporate his concern for the people and culture of China, and his memory of the friends and colleagues he has loved and the grace and beauty that charmed him there. It was in the mood of his China environment that he ended his penultimate chapter by quoting Henley's "Margaritae Sorori": "So be my passing. . . . Let me be gathered to the quiet west, the sundown, splendid and serene death." It was evident throughout the book that Yenching's longtime president, beloved by his students and his friends, would want to be remembered in connection with the university's motto, "Freedom through Truth for Service," long after some of the partisan furies of the present age shall have passed into a dusty limbo.

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—The Churchman, editorial, February 1, 1954.

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Mr. Humor

THE BENCHLEY ROUNDUP. A Selection by Nathaniel Benchley of His Favorites. Drawings by Gluyas Williams. Harper and Brothers. $3.50.

By Donald Ogden Stewart

HERE he is again—the whole glorious Benchley! Not the whole, actually: a selection of his son Nathaniel's "favorites." Not the whole, but enough to give you an idea of the glory. And not the whole Benchley, in the sense that no whole of a writer gets into his works. My "favorite" Benchley was the man himself—but that was a privilege reserved to a few, the most fortunate few in the world.

As I read his son's selections, I am surprised at how many of them I had never read before. This is not in any sense a criticism; it is more in the nature of a revelation of new delights, and also a realization that in past years I was probably afraid to read him for fear that I would find out how many of my own humorous bits had already been written by the Master. I think that most humorists today must humbly admit to the same indebtedness.

Benchley *was* humor. His writings were only one of the outward and visible evidences of the inner grace, the divine essence. But one must not make the mistake of considering humor as a sort of electric heater which one plugs in when one needs the illusion of warmth and happiness in the best of all possible worlds. Benchley *did* give out a radiant glow; his friends and his millions of readers *did* warm themselves and feel better because of his presence. But he was not one to be operated by a switch; he was a flame, capable of leaping out of the fireplace and bitterly scorching the hypocrite, the pretentious, the inhumane. There is a selection in this book, a piece about Paul Revere called "Whoa!" in which Paul, after jumping into his saddle on the verge of his historic ride, has a vision of the future United States in which "he saw ten million thin children working and ten million fat children playing in the warm sands. And now and again he saw five million youths, cheered on by a hundred million elders with fallen arches, marching out to give their arms and legs and lives for Something to Be Determined Later. And over all he saw the Stars and Stripes fluttering in the artificial breeze of an electric fan operated behind the scenes." A footnote advises that "this piece was published in 1924 when derision was not confused with disloyalty."

So loyalty certificates are now essential for humorists. This ought to occasion quite a flurry of footnotes among publishers, especially those who were so unfortunate as to publish Mark Twain, Mr. Dooley, George Ade, Ring Lardner, *et al.* The living ones, of course, can presumably clear themselves by testifying that they were duped into derision. I think that Benchley must be laughing at that footnote in his book. I hope so. It was such a wonderful laugh.

DONALD OGDEN STEWART is the well-known humorist and playwright.

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Time in Modern Fiction

THE HUGE SEASON. By Wright Morris. The Viking Press. $3.75.

REUNION. By Merle Miller. The Viking Press. $3.95.

By Stanley Cooperman

TIME is the fourth dimension of modern fiction. While awareness of time is not, of course, limited to any one literary era, the examination of its impact upon human life is a vital aspect of modern writing. The result of this preoccupation with time has been a progressive weakening of the traditional concern for eventful plot and the growth of novels in which "nothing really happens" except the concentric and vertical development of consciousness.

The modern focus of attention is not so much on what an individual does as on what he is; events are important only for the reaction to them, and even the reaction is used largely as a means for entering the interlocking relationship of individual minds. Novels which take place in a week or a day are now quite familiar, but represent a sharp deviation from the traditional stories which so often cover years or generations. A week or a day, however, is adequate for the modern novelist precisely because he is concerned with intensive rather than extensive time; he creates his people, not along horizontal lines from event to event, but at a given moment when all significant events have already occurred.

Controlled by a craftsman, the result is not static. Using the day or hour as a single point, the novelist blasts back into time, intermeshing present and past so that the "story" becomes the lives he wishes to present. The method is one of discovery rather than action. Once the discovery—of personality, relationships, attitudes—is achieved, any action which does follow becomes enormously significant, although it may be something as unimpressive as a reunion of ex-G. I.'s or a casual dinner.

Wright Morris, with "The Huge Season," and Merle Miller, with "Reunion," fit squarely into this neo-traditional area. Both novelists have written books which take place in a single day; both make extensive use of multiple time levels and interior monologue; both build around a reunion of people who have not seen each other for many years; and both are concerned primarily with developing a configuration of past relationships, heightened but not limited by a single situation existing within the present.

"The Huge Season" unfolds within the mind of Peter Foley, "professor of dead languages" and survivor from the late and unlamented Lost Generation, bachelor, respectable denizen of campus and boarding house. Time, for Foley, is something that existed only in the life of his father, who controlled it with a gold watch. Foley has inherited the watch but not the control; the drift of days holds him in a gentle but rigid pattern. Lacking pain, pleasure, or rebellion, Foley, in the present, is dead; he can exist only in remembering. There had been Lawrence, "who had the habit of perfection" and killed himself pursuing it; Proctor, raking the coals of his own Jewishness, probing, attaching himself to movements and rejecting them, and finally ending as an eccentric martyr before a Congressional committee. There had been Lou Baker, wild and amusing and spending a lifetime not finishing her novel; and Dickie, the playboy with the savagery and perverted innocence of a child.

Morris sees his people across time, framing them in a present which makes them anachronisms. The rebellion and voracious appetite for life of a generation ago appear vaguely ridiculous, partly because the rebels have grown older and partly because they have survived only to reach an era where most searches are suspect and perfection is embarrassing.

IF Morris uses the techniques of modern fiction, Merle Miller permits these techniques to use him. His is a virtuoso performance, projecting disrupted time sequence and an entire set of points of view—male and female, rich man, poor man, sane and insane. Through cinematic alternation of monologue Miller very nearly reaches the basic isolation, the mutual unknowability, of human beings. By overstating his case however, by neglecting nuance for contrast and producing his people like so many tooled parts, he creates a smooth and impressive literary machine whose sole reason for existence seems to be its own operation.

The men in "Reunion" are deliberately drawn to represent every social stratum and mental attitude. The result is altogether too neat—like those war novels which forever include one Italian, one Jew, one lawyer, one truck driver, one farmer, one Man with a Secret, one psychiatric case, and so on. The women in the novel fare no better: there is the Decent Harlot, the Wife with a Lover, the Rich Wife Who Cannot Have Children, the Neurotic Wife, and the Happy Wife—happy because she is married to a mechanic who is very uncomplicated and very good in bed. To some extent this familiar stable is rendered more effective by Miller's expert manipulation of prose to suit the point of view. The disturbing aspect of the method is precisely the fact that his calculations and measurements are often obvious and therefore intrusive.

The texture of Miller's prose is, as usual, brilliant: sentences like scattered glass glinting beneath the flash of wit. There is, however, too much surface; a reader may well feel that while racing through this rapid and competent work he is missing something which should be examined more slowly, perhaps even with more difficulty. The impression of superficiality remains even in Miller's satire, which is always barbed and often savage. The "pale novelist," the "liberal," the "good samaritan," and assorted cocktail-party leftovers are, after all, fairly safe targets, since reader can so easily enter a pact with author and assume that neither is to be found anywhere within the target area.

Miller's satire extends to his attempts at compassion, and the result is a sneer which seems to have become a posture he requires in order to function effectively. He speaks, for example, of "all the easily predictable Sylvias and Harrys" who live ordinary lives in the ordinary residential areas. Only when Merle Miller is able to work on the level where the "easily predictable" people are not predictable at all, will he reach beyond brilliant but limited pyrotechnics.

STANLEY COOPERMAN is a free-lance literary critic with a special interest in modern fiction.

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Selected New Books

Fiction

MOONSCAPE AND OTHER STORIES. By Mika Waltari. Translated by Naomi Walford. Putnam's. $3.50. This collection of short stories will surprise readers who think of Mika Waltari solely as a creator of turgid historical romance. Ranging from sophisticated farce to savage disillusion and surrealist narrative, Waltari proves himself an artist of considerable stature.

HESTER LILLY AND TWELVE SHORT STORIES. By Elizabeth Taylor. Viking. $3. Short stories of nuance and depth from a thoroughly competent and sensitive writer, one who is, fortunately, old-fashioned enough to make a craft of her fiction. The balance of each sentence, the texture of the images, the darting and exact point of the metaphors result in a charming and incisive book.

MORNING, NOON AND NIGHT. By Lars Lawrence. Putnam's. $3.95. A slashing novel of poverty-stricken miners in the American West. Like the "angry novelists" of the thirties, Mr. Lawrence overloads his case and oversimplifies his people. Not a book for readers who believe that fiction must offer something beyond an indictment.

THE FLINT ANCHOR. By Sylvia Townsend Warner. Viking. $3.75. A charming period piece giving much of the flavor of Victorian life and love. Behind a rather forbidding façade (the book opens with a tombstone and immediately proceeds to half a dozen deaths) is a witty story—not quite a "historical novel" in the usual sense but an expert blend of satire, pathos, and melodrama.

STANLEY COOPERMAN

Wallace Stevens's "Absolute Music"

COLLECTED POEMS. By Wallace Stevens. Alfred A. Knopf. $7.50.

By John Ciardi

NO POET of real talent will find an audience ready for him in our time. To the extent that he has achieved his own way of seeing and of saying he will be entering areas for which few but the most devoted readers will be ready. Wallace Stevens is not unique in having outrun the "audience," but he is certainly our one poet of unquestionable major stature to have separated himself by so great a distance. As far as the general reader, whoever that may be, is concerned, Stevens is American poetry's Great Unread. For every fifty citizens who know of Robert Frost and have read a few Frost poems or who have at least heard him read, one or two at best will be aware that Stevens exists. To be sure, the last few years have brought Stevens the Bollingen Prize and the National Book Award. It still seems significant that despite the fact that he has published five of the best books of poetry ever written by an American—the first one as far back as 1923—he has never attracted the notice of the Pulitzer Prize Committee in Poetry. By this time I don't see that the committee has any choice: if Stevens doesn't win the Pulitzer for '54 the committee might as well turn the prize into a blue ribbon and award it at the National Horse Show, for any relevance it will have to poetry.

Stevens's failure to reach the "audience" is a direct consequence, in some part, of his refusal to be a salesman and platform stumper for his poems and, rather more, of his absolute insistence that imagination is more "real" than reality. ("The world imagined is the absolute good") and his ascetic refusal to accept in his poems the reality of the "real" world. "I taste at the root of the tongue the unreal of what is unreal." Stevens not only prefers imagination; he denies the reality of the world's view of itself.

Joking with Robert Frost once in Florida (I report the exchange from Mr. Frost's account of it), Stevens said, "The trouble with you, Frost, is that you write on subjects." Frost replied, "The trouble with you is you write bric-à-brac."

The exchange was in play, but the center of the play locates a real difference. Some poets, Frost notable among

JOHN CIARDI has recently published a translation of Dante's "Inferno" in verse.

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them, write poems which have their references, at least in large part, in a recognizable external world; to the extent that we knew beforehand something at least about what they are describing, our understanding of the poems is made easier. Stevens, on the other hand, insists on the poem as its own imagination and subject; a thing made of itself in the saying; a self-entering, self-generating, self-sealing organism, a thing of its own nature.

> The sound of that slick sonata
> Finding its way from the house, makes music seem
> To be a nature, a place in which itself
> Is that which produces everything else.

In the pursuit of that absolute music, that music which rises from itself and follows itself, Stevens has gone farther than any other man in English to achieve his sound effects. So in Bantams in Pine Woods:

> Chieftain Iffucan of Azcan in caftan
> Of tan with henna hackle, halt.

The reader who does not stay around long enough to realize that this is good play beginning with the comic effect of saluting a champion bantam rooster (significantly strutting about in a pine woods as if he meant to knock over the trees) by the ridiculous name he bears in the pedigree book—such a reader will simply find himself puzzled here, especially if he is one of those literalists who must always know at once where he stands. For that matter, even the most devoted admirer of Stevens is likely to find himself swallowing hard to take down some of the decorative French tags and quasi-Elizabethan lolly-lilly ricanic's Stevens so often runs in while pursuing his "absolute music."

It is not for such devices, or for the philosophy of the imagination, that one falls in love with Stevens, but for the magnificence of his ear. Let any reader begin with such a poem as Le Monocle de Mon Oncle, or Sunday Morning, and simply ask himself if English or American speech has ever been made to overflow with such music as this. Stevens teaches the language its own singing possibilities.

Even in profoundest admiration, however, I cannot get rid of the feeling that Stevens's true golden period ended with Transport to Summer. His sixth book, Auroras of Autumn, and what must count as his seventh, being the section of new poems first published in this collection as The Rock, are still the work of the master, but of the master repeating himself, and just a bit wearily. Stevens is now seventy-five. The age is certainly no necessary limit to the imagination; William Carlos Williams is seventy-five too, and his last book contains some of his best things. Nevertheless, every poet past his first excitement is tempted to become talky and to borrow from himself, and of late Stevens seems to have succumbed to the temptation. The images and the rhythms that arrived to him once as to a marriage tend now simply to arrive to an anniversary, and to come not in an excitement but in a habituation. It is all there, all written, all made. He tends to assume too much from his own past performance. It seems more inviting to talk about his perceptions than to make them happen. It is, to be sure, rich talk. In such a recent poem as To an Old Philosopher in Rome it becomes almost the real thing again. But the total begins to tire. Even magnificence can grow late. But what matters is the magnificence, and that will be there as long as the language is spoken.

The Phaidon Ingres

THE PAINTINGS OF J. A. D. INGRES. By Georges Wildenstein. Phaidon Publishers. Distributed by Garden City Books. $12.50.

By S. Lane Faison, Jr.

IN RECENT years the Phaidon monographs have progressed from luxury-trade picture books with interesting introductory essays into full-dress *catalogues raisonnés* of an artist's complete work, with the same generous illustration as before. The monographs devoted to Uccello and Fra Angelico, by John Pope-Hennessy, and to Francisco de Zurbarán, by Martin Soria (reviewed in *The Nation* for September 4), are the most important books to date on these great artists, both for their catalogues and for the contribution made by the introductory essay.

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not measure up to the standard previously set in these monographs. Its one hundred and twenty glossy plates (eight in color) are less adequate than at first they appear to be. Value contrasts have been forced, with a consequent loss in halftone ranges. For Ingres this means a fatal diminution of the plastic power of his taut forms. Comparison with the plates in the Editions du Dimanche volume on Ingres, even though they in turn are too soft, will bring out the truth of these statements.

Wildenstein's nine-page essay can only be described as a perfunctory assortment of easy platitudes. How prone the French are, notwithstanding their many brilliant writers, to turn out this sort of thing! No discussion of Ingres' development is given, very little appraisal of his place in the history of art or society, and no criticism whatever. The essay is quite overbalanced by an elaborate chronology of the sort that some research assistant might compile.

Although the catalogue of Ingres' work in oil is an admirably professional job, it has its limitations. It is true that complete information is afforded as to dimensions, location, date, bibliography, and total history of each painting. But on the curious pretext that a previous work of the author has been misquoted by other critics—or could it be other dealers?—who failed to mention in the case of certain doubtful pictures that he called them apocryphal, no work which Wildenstein considers unauthentic is either illustrated or discussed. Thus the reader is not allowed to participate in the author's processes of analysis, or in the end to judge the quality of his connoisseurship. As a matter of fact, it is of the very best, and the loss to the reader is therefore considerable. There is an astonishing amount of mediocre work among the two hundred small illustrations included with the text of the catalogue. More often than the catalogue indicates one wonders whether some student of Ingres—there were many—was not responsible for the execution of the work in question.

Another lack is the absence of any discussion of Ingres' work in pencil or water color, or of the development of a composition through the known stages to the final production in oil. Although several samples of these studies are beautifully reproduced in full-page plates, in a number of instances the location of the item is not given, and as none of these studies are in the catalogue this elementary information is simply left out. Locations of the paintings themselves appear only in the catalogue, and it is annoying to have to look up the right number in the catalogue section to find out where the picture is owned. It is curious that the editors did not catch this omission, inasmuch as the locations are given with the plates in the other volumes of the series.

All in all, one guesses that this book was compiled from the wonderfully complete records kept by the great art-dealing establishment over which the author presides, and that the avoidance of discussion and criticism represents the exigencies of the trade, not the limitations of the writer himself.

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If a railroad engine, powerful enough to pull thousands of tons, were used persistently—day after day—to drag a train of toy cars, everybody would say that the engine was being inefficiently employed. And yet, this is precisely the way the term "God" is habitually used by the honest and well meaning people who belong to the churches.

We have learned, in earlier installments, that the term "God" comes to us out of a great struggle, which was led by the Hebrew prophets, against the unjust economic and social practices identified with Baal and "other gods". It was this very struggle that lifted the terms "God" and "Jehovah" (or "Yahweh") upward from the level of heathenism. The prophets, who victoriously fought heathen gods, learned to think of Deity as a Personal Force, above Nature, but identified with Social Justice (not socialism or communism).

The idea of social justice was expelled so thoroughly from the ancient church that it has been treated as an intruder in the sphere of religion for more than fifteen hundred years. The term "God" has been restricted to the idea of individual righteousness and personal redemption—just like the powerful engine pulling only a toy train. In the prophet Isaiah's vision of God's purpose "He will bring forth justice to the nations [not simply to Israel]. He will not fail nor be discouraged until he have set justice in the earth" [not merely in Israel], (Isa. 42). Instead of this imperial world-ideal, most religious people, in all honesty and sincerity, have been satisfied with personal salvation and individual comfort from the Lord. (A little selfish, is it not?) Do you wish to use your influence in promoting knowledge of truth and fact which will help to bring the churches and the general public up to the intellectual level of our progressive theological seminaries and outstanding universities?—A circular will be sent to you upon receipt of a three-cent stamp to cover postage. Requests for the circular must be accompanied by the three-cent stamp to defray cost of mailing.—L. Wallis, Box 73, Forest Hills, Long Island, New York.

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Theater

Harold Clurman

DRAMATIC critics are said to rejoice in plays they dislike, for it is supposedly easier to achieve eloquence and verve in condemnation than in praise. Many readers of dramatic criticism, I suspect, prefer a pan to a rave; through the critic's spleen the reader vents his own bile at little cost.

For my own part, though I am too often given the occasion to be severe, I dislike disliking. I find it especially painful, I must confess, to dislike what the community cherishes. I shall therefore not dwell long on what I must reject. In a dwindling theater this is perhaps the most honorable course.

"Home Is the Hero" (Booth Theater), by Walter Macken, strikes me as an unnecessary play. I do not see its point, I do not recognize its theme, and if it is merely a tale to be told I do not perceive its fascination. A braggart who has killed an innocent man in a drunken brawl returns home from jail. He is still savage, with an added and insulting touch of self-righteousness. His family rebels. Why should this interest us? The characters are Irish and occasionally employ a phrase that capers or sings, but there are many much better Irish plays —O'Casey's, for example—which are never produced.

The Theater Guild's production, moreover, is poor. Who ever lived in that characterless room? There are nice actors in the cast—Art Smith for one—but very little notable acting. Peggy Ann Garner is an attractive girl; why must she be disgraced with such an awful wig? Who ever said all Irish girls are brunettes?

Down at the Cherry Lane Theater another play by a gentleman of Irish birth, William Congreve's "The Way of the World" (1700), is given a creditably crisp production. It is not at all an easy play to do, because its language, though exquisitely witty, is somewhat intricate for purposes of speech and its highly cultivated bad manners are foreign to modern, particularly American, man. The young people in this production manage the speech and the manners remarkably well. This is especially true of Nancy Wickwire—who may prove something of a find—Priscilla Morrill, Thayer David, and Raymond Johnson. It is gratifying to know that we have young actors who without strain or affectation can speak and behave as if not all our citadels of theatrical culture were situated on the wrong side of the tracks.

I must warn my readers however that in seeing "The Way of the World" they will be able to relish its prose without following its plot. This should not worry them. The plot is absurd—as are most plots. In "The Way of the World" it is even difficult, unless one is a specialist in English literature, to identify the characters by name. Instead of being distressing there is something of an abstract gaiety in this: it is like watching brightly quaint figures flitting about, sparkling and remote, in an unfamiliar world.

"THE BOY FRIEND" (Royale Theater) also has something distant about it. Perhaps this is one aspect of its appeal. (To enjoy our day we must either get more deeply involved in it or escape it as much as possible.) This show, I must not fail to report, is an enormous success in London, and may possibly be one here, especially with avid theatergoers. For it is based on a theater joke—a parody, a pastiche, a burlesque, or, if you will, an evocation of "the musical comedy of the 1920's," or of a somewhat earlier date.

It is very well produced. Its casting and cast are admirable. Julie Andrews in the lead, the comic soubrette, and the four friends of the "heroine" are perfect. The costumes by Reginald Wooley, the choreography by John Hernwood, and the direction by Vida Hope are witty, meticulously observed—the models must have been old show-business photographs—and reveal the sure hand of a refined craftsmanship. The lack of push or punch is also refreshing; a certain British charm and intimacy, a delicacy of temper and good humor are everywhere evident.

Yet I failed to share the audience's enchantment. The pleasure in parody may be something which eludes me—a blind

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spot. I remember the musical-comedy tunes of the twenties; they were and still are excellent tunes. Sandy Wilson's score does not catch their charm. I do not find the foolishness of the old musicals any more foolish than that of the new. A parody or a teasing evocation of a past era should have a grace and attraction of its own and not depend so much on our memory of that which is recalled. Robbins's Keystone Comedy number in "High Button Shoes" was a brilliant bit of choreographic satire and would delight a spectator who had never seen a Keystone Comedy. It had a present, so to speak, a permanent value.

If we are asked to laugh at old dress and old modes we should be shown fewer seams and more of the whole cloth. While watching "The Boy Friend" and appreciating its skill and the darling homeliness of its Cockney girls—a marvelous job of make-up, by the way—I prayed that I might see some good revivals of the better musicals of the twenties, beside which this pleasant spoof is a skimpy thing, an over-long skit. But perhaps the parody here is only that of the English imitation of the American shows of the period.

At another theater in the jolly Village (the Provincetown) a "commercial" play of 1766, "The Clandestine Marriage," by David Garrick and George Colman, is being commendably done. There is an engaging performance in it by Frederic Warriner in the part of the decrepit rake, Lord Ogleby; Jacqueline Brook's voice is lined with a velvety tearfulness; and the old-old-fashioned story framework is decked with sprightly dialogue and always welcome quips aimed at the pretense and avarice of the (then) new class of money grubbers.

Music

B. H. Haggin

BEHIND what is presented to our eyes and ears in public is a machinery whose operation we get to know very little about. As editor from 1948 to 1952 of *Musical America,* one of the chief advertising and publicity media of the musical professions and businesses, Cecil Smith was in a position to know a great deal about that machinery, and to tell us a great deal in "Worlds of Music" (Lippincott, $5). Since he is discussing matters we are ignorant about we need to know whether we can read him with confidence in his accuracy; and we have to decide this from the things he says that we do know about.

We have to decide this not only about fact but about opinion, since the book inevitably offers both. It includes, for example, occasional critical evaluation; and we note therefore the level of musical taste and judgment revealed in the statement that "Mengelberg's extraordinary ability as a technical disciplinarian was equalled by his gifts as an interpreter. In the years since his departure the [New York Philharmonic] may never have surpassed some of its performances under him, memorably of Strauss's 'Ein Heldenleben' and Liszt's 'Les Preludes.'" And music criticism aside, we note soundly reasoned criticisms of American broadcasting of music and of musical education in schools, colleges, and conservatories—but also fancy ideas an editor of a trade paper finds effective when addressing women's clubs and conventions of teachers or orchestra managers. For example the idea that music throughout the country should be not an importation from New York ("the curse of our whole musical life") but "the best that our own communities can produce." I'm not contending that people in these communities shouldn't produce music for themselves; but suppose someone were to argue that the novels they read or the paintings they see should be not importations from New York but "the best that our own communities can produce."

And we find some of the fancy thinking done with facts invented to fit the thinking—notably in the discussion of the New York City Opera. Thus, concerning the change in the opera public in the last twenty-five years we are told that with the decline in singing managers have had to depend more on the

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operas themselves to attract the public; and at the same time the public's level of appreciation has improved: "twenty years ago you could shoot deer in the house when a Mozart opera or Strauss's 'Der Rosenkavalier' was on the boards," but today "Figaro" and "Don Giovanni" are given every season at the City Center and "Der Rosenkavalier" had to be given six times instead of three. All this in amplification of the contention that Halasz succeeded in attracting the musical public because he concentrated on the work rather than on voices; in addition to which "he attracted the theater-going public . . . by treating opera as a form of drama that requires as persuasive staging as a Broadway play." But actually we have had, in the last twenty-five years, Flagstad, Ponselle, Rethberg, Leider, Lehmann, Milanov, Steber, Berger, Melchior, Bjoerling, Tucker, Warren, Pinza; actually we have today Steber, Callas, Tebaldi, Gueden, Bjoerling, Tucker, Valetti, Warren, London, Siepi, Hines; actually they are still what attracts people to the Metropolitan; but actually the "Cosi Fan Tutte" and "Rosenkavalier" I attended in the mid-twenties and the "Don Giovanni" of 1929 drew full houses. As for the New York City Opera, actually the audiences, paying less than Metropolitan prices, were content to hear operas without Metropolitan stars but with the fresh, lovely voices of the young singers available to Halasz; and actually for the sake of the good musical performances they put up with the ineptitudes and absurdities of scenery and staging they wouldn't have tolerated in a play on Broadway.

Nor is it true that the New York City Opera's low prices attracted "a new audience, largely unacquainted with opera," and that it was therefore "a people's opera catering to an audience unacquainted with the traditions of foreign-language presentation," which for Mr. Smith means an audience requiring English-language presentation. Actually they attracted the New York musical public that was acquainted with opera through the Metropolitan's performances and broadcasts and welcomed the opportunity to hear good performances for less than the Metropolitan's prices—a public which, then, was accustomed to foreign-language presentation and gave evidence of being satisfied with it: the City Center not only attracted people familiar with foreign-language presentation but attracted them with performances in foreign languages. Mr. Smith argues that "no translated opera has ever frightened away customers who would have come to hear the same opera in a foreign language" (which I don't think is true); but more significant is the fact that no customers were frightened away from City Center by the foreign languages—the significance being that a theater filled by "Carmen" and "Faust" in French and "The Barber of Seville" in Italian indicates no need for English-language presentation. He points to the "astonishingly strong pull at the box office" of "Figaro" in English; but he is silent about the equally strong pull, a couple of years earlier, of "Don Giovanni" in Italian. And discussing Halasz's adventurous repertory policy he cites the box-office success of "Salome," "Der Rosenkavalier," "Ariadne auf Naxos," "Eugen Onegin"; but he omits to say these successes were achieved by performances in German and Russian.

These are only the normal debating tactics of the opera-in-English cultist; but they are part of the reason for reading other sections of the book without absolute confidence in the accuracy of Mr. Smith's facts and reasoning; and an additional reason is what he writes about the operation of the machinery of the concert business—or rather the difference between what he writes now and what he wrote five years ago. The picture now includes unattractive details—in particular the grim situation of the young pianist or violinist who *is* accepted by one of the two big management corporations, and whose career

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ends after the three years it takes for him to make the circuit of the corporation's organized audiences once around—unattractive details the picture did not include five years ago: then we read only of what the managements did for young artists even beyond giving them engagements—of the "study, initial promotion, and even basic living costs . . . financed by NCAC and Columbia for as long as two or three years before commissions began to come in from their first paying dates." It may be natural for Mr. Smith to have written this in *Musical America* and to write more realistically in a book published after he left *Musical America* for a job in London; but it doesn't make him a writer one reads with the confidence I spoke of.

Letters

(Continued from inside front cover)

Ben Hecht's Story of His Life

Dear Sirs: Ira Wolfert's characterization of Ben Hecht's life as revealed in "A Child of the Century" as "a long personal Fourth of July which he spent celebrating his own independence by shooting off a mouthful of firecrackers" is a wonderful one. This book's uniqueness is enhanced by the fact that we live in an age of intimidation when playing safe has become a national game. Everything in this new Hecht book is so wonderful, so refreshing, so honest, so heart-warming, and so right that one wonders how Mr. Hecht happened. I hope his book will be read by many people.

Rogers City, Mich. L. H. GREGORY

Or Is It Fiction?

Dear Sirs: Ben Hecht tells us in his autobiography that he spent a good many years in Chicago inventing fake incidents—a piracy in the Chicago River, for instance—and writing page-one pieces about them. He also tells us how he organized a phony treasure hunt, planted some pieces-of-eight, and sold lots like hotcakes in Key Largo during the Florida land boom. It was inevitable that such a charlatan should turn to fiction (fiction labeled as such). Those of us present-day Chicago newspapermen who shelled out $5 apiece for his rambling life story have reason to wonder if Mr. Hecht has ever written anything but fiction, and this goes too for most of the incidents and anecdotes in "A Child of the Century."

Shame on Ira Wolfert for telling us that "only a bore could fail to enjoy reading his account." It is beautifully written, breezy—and patently phony.

Chicago, Ill. JACK OLSEN

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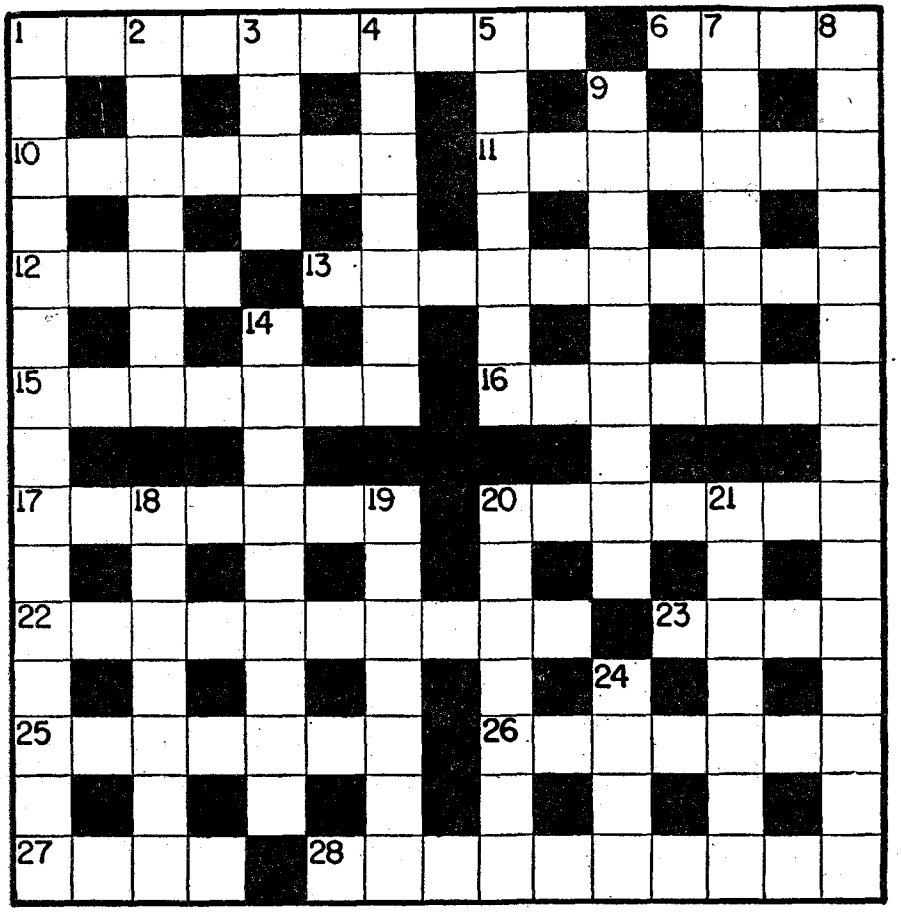
Crossword Puzzle No. 589

BY FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1 Blow left? No—it's broken. (3, 2, 5)
6 and 12. Scared us bad, but we might have gone to a lot for them. (4, 4)
10 One who likes things other than simple? (7)
11 Good accounts aren't kept in this. (7)
12 See 6 across.
13 You might find this lad amusing at dinner. (10)
15 Do I read incorrectly the way the message was sent? (7)
16 and 24 down. Red flag? (7, 4)
17 Imagine oneself unwanted, to try for a hint. (4, 3)
20 Just the bird to put a foot down in front. (7)
22 Rock a smooth wind arrangement, by the sound of it. (10)
23 The boom, perhaps, blows back. (4)
25 Something about the seaside doesn't make one feel very well. (7)
26 The saint is shaken about the edge of the flower. (7)
27 Kingdom coming? The one of Jubilo. (4)
28 Con men stop parts of it. (10)

DOWN

1 He should be much less important than the policeman of the year. (7, 2, 3, 3)
2 A crusader can't get mixed up over the color. (7)
3 This drink should have a good turnover. (4)
4 Such beets should be crimson. (7)
5 Speller, perhaps. (7)
7 Tinny. (7)
8 Is plain rain bad after a record opening for such drivers? (15)
9 In general, denoted by the first star. (9)
14 With which the course is improved by even putting. (9)
18 The first letter is a plant which comes up in many countries. (7)
19 Sort of 3 to this in addition. (7)
20 Carbon dioxide makes this! (4, 3)
21 Is this actress commonly aware of slow-mounting infuriation? (7)
24 See 16 across.

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE No. 588

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